# The Verbalist

Alfred Ayres

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BY ALFRED AYRES.

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THE

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AND TO SOME OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THOSE WHO WOULD SPEAK AND WRITE WITH PROPRIETY.

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TO BRIEF DISCUSSIONS OF THE RIGHT AND THE WRONG USE OF WORDS

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BY

ALFRED AYRES.

We remain shackled by timidity till we have learned to speak with propriety.—Johnson.

As a man is known by his company, so a man's company may be known by his manner of expressing himself.—Swift.

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# PREFATORY NOTE.

THE title-page sufficiently sets forth the end this little book is intended to serve.

For convenience' sake I have arranged in alphabetical order the subjects treated of, and for economy's sake I have kept in mind that "he that uses many words for the explaining of any subject doth, like the cuttle-fish, hide himself in his own ink."

The curious inquirer who sets himself to look for the learning in the book is advised that he will best find it in such works as George P. Marsh's "Lectures on the English Language," Fitzedward Hall's "Recent Exemplifications of False Philology," and "Modern English," Richard Grant White's "Words and Their Uses," Edward S. Gould's "Good English,"

William Mathews' "Words: their Use and Abuse," Dean Alford's "The Queen's English," George Washington Moon's "Bad English," and "The Dean's English," Blank's "Vulgarisms and Other Errors of Speech," Alexander Bain's "English Composition and Rhetoric," Bain's "Higher English Grammar," Bain's "Composition Grammar," Quackenbos' "Composition and Rhetoric," John Nichol's "English Composition," William Cobbett's "English Grammar," Peter Bullions' "English Grammar," Goold Brown's "Grammar of English Grammars," Graham's "English Synonymes," Crabb's "English Synonymes," Bigelow's "Hand-book of Punctuation," and other kindred works.

Suggestions and criticisms are solicited, with the view of profiting by them in future editions.

If "The Verbalist" receive as kindly a welcome as its companion volume, "The Orthoëpist," has received, I shall be content.

A. A.

NEW YORK, *October*, 1881.

Eschew fine words as you would rouge.—Hare.

Cant is properly a double-distilled lie; the second power of a lie.—Carlyle.

If a gentleman be to study any language, it ought to be that of his own country.—Locke.

In language the unknown is generally taken for the magnificent.—Richard Grant White.

He who has a superlative for everything, wants a measure for the great or small.—Lavater.

Inaccurate writing is generally the expression of inaccurate thinking.—Richard Grant White.

To acquire a few tongues is the labor of a few years; but to be eloquent in one is the labor of a life.—Anonymous.

Words and thoughts are so inseparably connected that an artist in words is necessarily an artist in thoughts.—Wilson Flagg.

It is an invariable maxim that words which add nothing to the sense or to the clearness must diminish the force of the expression.—Campbell.

Propriety of thought and propriety of diction are commonly found together. Obscurity of expression generally springs from confusion of ideas.—Macaulay.

He who writes badly thinks badly. Confusedness in words can proceed from nothing but confusedness in the thoughts which give rise to them.—Cobbett.

# THE VERBALIST.

**A—An.** The second form of the indefinite article is used for the sake of euphony only. Herein everybody agrees, but what everybody does not agree in is, that it is euphonious to use *an* before a word beginning with an aspirated *h*, when the accented syllable of the word is the second. For myself, so long as I continue to aspirate the *h's* in such words as *heroic*, *harangue*, and *historical*, I shall continue to use *a* before them; and when I adopt the Cockney mode of pronouncing such words, then I shall use *an* before them. To my ear it is just as euphonious to say, "I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon *an* high mountain and eminent," as it is to say *an* harangue, *an* heroic, or *an* historical. *An* is well enough before the doubtful British aspiration, but before the distinct American aspiration it is wholly out of place. The reply will perhaps be, "But these *h's* are silent; the change of accent from the first syllable to the second neutralizes their aspiration." However true this may be in England, it is not at all true in America; hence we Americans should use *a* and not *an* before such *h's* until we decide to ape the Cockney mode of pronouncing them.

Errors are not unfrequently made by omitting to repeat the article in a sentence. It should always be repeated

when a noun or an adjective referring to a distinct thing is introduced; take, for example, the sentence, "He has a black and white horse." If two horses are meant, it is clear that it should be, "He has a black and *a* white horse." See THE.

**Ability—Capacity.** The distinctions between these two words are not always observed by those who use them. "*Capacity* is the power of receiving and retaining knowledge with facility; *ability* is the power of applying knowledge to practical purposes. Both these faculties are requisite to form a great character: capacity to conceive, and ability to execute designs. Capacity is shown in quickness of apprehension. Ability supposes something done; something by which the mental power is exercised in executing, or performing, what has been perceived by the capacity."—Graham's "English Synonymes."

**Abortive.** An outlandish use of this word may be occasionally met with, especially in the newspapers. "A lad was yesterday caught in the act of *abortively* appropriating a pair of shoes." That is abortive that is untimely, that has not been borne its full time, that is immature. We often hear *abortion* used in the sense of failure, but never by those that study to express themselves in chaste English.

**Above.** There is little authority for using this word as an adjective. Instead of, "the *above* statement," say, "the *foregoing* statement." *Above* is also used very inelegantly for *more than;* as, "above a mile," "above a thousand"; also, for *beyond;* as, "above his strength."

**Accident.** See CASUALTY.

**Accord.** "He [the Secretary of the Treasury] was shown through the building, and the information he desired was *accorded* him."—Reporters' English.

"The heroes prayed, and Pallas from the skies
*Accords* their vow."—Pope.

The goddess of wisdom, when she granted the prayers of her worshipers, may be said to have *accorded;* not so, however, when the clerks of our Sub-Treasury answer the inquiries of their chief.

**Accuse.** See BLAME IT ON.

**Acquaintance.** See FRIEND.

**Ad.** This abbreviation for the word *advertisement* is very justly considered a gross vulgarism. It is doubtful whether it is permissible under any circumstances.

**Adapt—Dramatize.** In speaking and in writing of stage matters, these words are often misused. To *adapt* a play is to modify its construction with the view of improving its form for representation. Plays translated from one language into another are usually more or less *adapted;* i. e., altered to suit the taste of the public before which the translation is to be represented. To *dramatize* is to change the form of a story from the narrative to the dramatic; i. e., to make a drama out of a story. In the first instance, the product of the playwright's labor is called an *adaptation;* in the second, a *dramatization.*

**Adjectives.** "Very often adjectives stand where adverbs might be expected; as, 'drink *deep*,' 'this looks *strange*,' 'standing *erect*.'

"We have also examples of one adjective qualifying another adjective; as, '*wide* open,' '*red* hot,' 'the *pale* blue sky.' Sometimes the corresponding adverb is used, but with a different meaning; as, 'I found the way *easy—easily*'; 'it appears *clear—clearly*.' Although there is a propriety in the employment of the adjective in certain instances, yet such forms as '*indifferent* well,' '*extreme* bad,' are grammatical errors. 'He was interrogated *relative* to that cir-

cumstance,' should be *relatively*, or *in relation to*. It is not unusual to say, 'I would have done it *independent* of that circumstance,' but *independently* is the proper construction.

"The employment of adjectives for adverbs is accounted for by the following considerations:

"(1.) In the classical languages the neuter adjective may be used as an adverb, and the analogy would appear to have been extended to English.

"(2.) In the oldest English the adverb was regularly formed from the adjective by adding 'e,' as 'soft, soft*e*,' and the dropping of the 'e' left the adverb in the adjective form; thus, '*clæne*,' adverb, became 'clean,' and appears in the phrase '*clean* gone'; '*fæste*, fast,' 'to stick *fast*.' By a false analogy, many adjectives that never formed adverbs in *-e* were freely used as adverbs in the age of Elizabeth: 'Thou didst it *excellent*,' '*equal* (for *equally*) good,' '*excellent* well.' This gives precedent for such errors as those mentioned above.

"(3.) There are cases where the subject is qualified rather than the verb, as with verbs of incomplete predication, 'being,' 'seeming,' 'arriving,' etc. In 'the matter seems *clear*,' 'clear' is part of the predicate of 'matter.' 'They arrived *safe*': 'safe' does not qualify 'arrived,' but goes with it to complete the predicate. So, 'he sat *silent*,' 'he stood *firm*.' 'It comes *beautiful*' and 'it comes *beautifully*' have different meanings. This explanation applies especially to the use of participles as adverbs, as in Southey's lines on Lodore; the participial epithets applied there, although appearing to modify 'came,' are really additional predications about 'the water,' in elegantly shortened form. 'The church stood *gleaming* through the trees': 'gleaming' is a shortened predicate of 'church'; and the full form would be, 'the church stood *and gleamed*.' The participle retains

its force as such, while acting the part of a coördinating adjective, complement to 'stood'; 'stood gleaming' is little more than 'gleamed.' The feeling of adverbial force in 'gleaming' arises from the subordinate participial form joined with a verb, 'stood,' that seems capable of predicating by itself. '*Passing* strange' is elliptical: 'passing (surpassing) *what is* strange.'"—Bain.

"The comparative adjectives *wiser*, *better*, *larger*, etc., and the contrasting adjectives *different*, *other*, etc., are often so placed as to render the construction of the sentence awkward; as, 'That is a much *better* statement of the case *than* yours,' instead of, 'That statement of the case is much *better than* yours'; 'Yours is a *larger* plot of ground *than* John's,' instead of, 'Your plot of ground is *larger than* John's'; 'This is a *different* course of proceeding *from* what I expected,' instead of, 'This course of proceeding is *different from* what I expected'; 'I could take no *other* method of silencing him *than* the one I took,' instead of, 'I could take no method of silencing him *other than* the one I took.'"—Gould's "Good English," p. 69.

**Administer.** "Carson died from blows *administered* by policeman Johnson."—"New York Times." If policeman Johnson was as barbarous as is this use of the verb *to administer*, it is to be hoped that he was hanged. Governments, oaths, medicine, affairs—such as the affairs of the state—are *administered*, but not blows: *they* are *dealt*.

**Adopt.** This word is often used instead of *to decide upon*, and of *to take;* thus, "The measures *adopted* [by Parliament], as the result of this inquiry, will be productive of good." Better, "The measures *decided upon*," etc. Instead of, "What course shall you *adopt* to get your pay?" say, "What course shall you *take*," etc. *Adopt* is properly used in a sentence like this: "The course (or measures)

proposed by Mr. Blank was *adopted* by the committee." That is, what was Blank's was *adopted* by the committee—a correct use of the word, as *to adopt*, means, to assume as one's own.

*Adopt* is sometimes so misused that its meaning is inverted. "Wanted to adopt," in the heading of advertisements, not unfrequently is intended to mean that the advertiser wishes to be *relieved* of the care of a child, not that he wishes to *assume* the care of one.

**Aggravate.** This word is often used when the speaker means to provoke, irritate, or anger. Thus, "It *aggravates* [provokes] me to be continually found fault with"; "He is easily *aggravated* [irritated]." To *aggravate* means to make worse, to heighten. We therefore very properly speak of *aggravating* circumstances. To say of a person that he is *aggravated* is as incorrect as to say that he is *palliated*.

**Agriculturist.** This word is to be preferred to *agriculturalist*. See CONVERSATIONIST.

**Alike.** This word is often most bunglingly coupled with *both*. Thus, "These bonnets are both alike," or, worse still, if possible, "both just alike." This reminds one of the story of Sam and Jem, who were very like each other, especially Sam.

**All.** See UNIVERSAL.

**All over.** "The disease spread *all over* the country." It is more logical and more emphatic to say, "The disease spread *over all* the country."

**Allegory.** An elaborated metaphor is called an *allegory;* both are figurative representations, the words used signifying something beyond their literal meaning. Thus, in the eightieth Psalm, the Jews are represented under the symbol of a vine:

"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast

cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it."

An allegory is sometimes so extended that it makes a volume; as in the case of Swift's "Tale of a Tub," Arbuthnot's "John Bull," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," etc. Fables and parables are short allegories.

**Allow.** This word is frequently misused in the West and South, where it is made to do service for *assert* or *to be of opinion*. Thus, "He *allows* that he has the finest horse in the country."

**Allude.** The treatment this word has received is to be specially regretted, as its misuse has wellnigh robbed it of its true meaning, which is, to intimate delicately, to refer to without mentioning directly. *Allude* is now very rarely used in any other sense than that of to speak of, to mention, to name, which is a long way from being its legitimate signification. This degradation is doubtless a direct outcome of untutored desire to be fine and to use big words.

**Alone.** This word is often improperly used for *only*. That is *alone* which is unaccompanied; that is *only* of which there is no other. "Virtue *alone* makes us happy," means that virtue unaided suffices to make us happy; "Virtue *only* makes us happy," means that nothing else can do it—that that, and that only (not alone), can do it. "This means of communication is employed by man *alone*."

Dr. Quackenbos should have written, "By man *only*." See also ONLY.

**Amateur—Novice.** There is much confusion in the use of these two words, although they are entirely distinct from each other in meaning. An *amateur* is one versed in, or a lover and practicer of, any particular pursuit, art, or science, but *not* engaged in it professionally. A *novice* is one who is new or inexperienced in any art or business—a beginner, a tyro. A professional actor, then, who is new and unskilled in his art, is a *novice* and not an *amateur*. An amateur may be an artist of great experience and extraordinary skill.

**Ameliorate.** "The health of the Empress of Germany is greatly *ameliorated*." Why not say *improved?*

**Among.** See BETWEEN.

**Amount of Perfection.** The observant reader of periodical literature often notes forms of expression which are perhaps best characterized by the word *bizarre*. Of these queer locutions, *amount of perfection* is a very good example. Mr. G. F. Watts, in the "Nineteenth Century," says, "An *amount of perfection* has been reached which I was by no means prepared for." What Mr. Watts meant to say was, doubtless, that a *degree of excellence* had been reached. There are not a few who, in their prepossession for everything transatlantic, seem to be of opinion that the English language is generally better written in England than it is in America. Those who think so are counseled to examine the diction of some of the most noted English critics and essayists, beginning, if they will, with Matthew Arnold.

**And.** Few vulgarisms are more common than the use of *and* for *to*. Examples: "Come *and* see me before you go"; "Try *and* do what you can for him"; "Go *and* see

your brother, if you can." In such sentences as these, the proper particle to use is clearly *to* and not *and*.

*And* is sometimes improperly used instead of *or;* thus, "It is obvious that a language like the Greek *and* Latin" (language?), etc., should be, "a language like the Greek *or the* Latin" (language), etc. There is no such thing as a Greek and Latin language.

**Answer—Reply.** These two words should not be used indiscriminately. An *answer* is given to a question; a *reply*, to an assertion. When we are addressed, we *answer;* when we are accused, we *reply*. We *answer* letters, and *reply* to any arguments, statements, or accusations they may contain. Crabb is in error in saying that *replies* "are used in personal discourse only." *Replies*, as well as *answers*, are written. We very properly write, "I have now, I believe, *answered* all your questions and *replied* to all your arguments." A *rejoinder* is made to a *reply*. "Who goes there?" he cried; and, receiving no *answer*, he fired. "The advocate *replied* to the charges made against his client."

**Anticipate.** Lovers of big words have a fondness for making this verb do duty for *expect*. *Anticipate* is derived from two Latin words meaning *before* and *to take*, and, when properly used, means, to take beforehand; to go before so as to preclude another; to get the start or ahead of; to enjoy, possess, or suffer, in expectation; to foretaste. It is, therefore, misused in such sentences as, "Her death is hourly *anticipated*"; "By this means it is *anticipated* that the time from Europe will be lessened two days."

**Antithesis.** A phrase that opposes contraries is called an *antithesis*.

"I see a chief who leads my chosen sons,
All armed with points, *antitheses*, and puns."

The following are examples:

"Though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong, without rage; without o'erflowing, full."

"Contrasted faults through all their manners reign;
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew."

The following is an excellent example of *personification* and *antithesis* combined:

"Talent convinces; Genius but excites:
That tasks the reason; this the soul delights.
Talent from sober judgment takes its birth,
And reconciles the pinion to the earth;
Genius unsettles with desires the mind,
Contented not till earth be left behind."

In the following extract from Johnson's "Life of Pope," individual peculiarities are contrasted by means of antitheses:

"Of genius—that power which constitutes a poet; that quality without which judgment is cold, and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates—the superiority must, with some hesitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred that of this poetical vigor Pope had only a little, because Dryden had more; for every other writer, since Milton, must give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it must be said that, if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always hasty, either excited by some external occasion or extorted by domestic necessity; he composed without consideration and published without correction. What his mind could supply at call or gather in one excursion was all that he sought and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to con-

dense his sentiments, to multiply his images, and to accumulate all that study might produce or chance might supply. If the flights of Dryden, therefore, are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight. Dryden's page is a natural field, rising into inequalities, and diversified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and levcled by the roller."

There are forms of antithesis in which the contrast is only of a secondary kind.

**Any.** This word is sometimes made to do service for *at all.* We say properly, "She is not *any* better"; but we can not properly say, "She does not see *any*," meaning that she is blind.

**Anybody else.** "Public School Teachers are informed that *anybody else's* is correct."—"New York Times," Sunday, July 31, 1881. An English writer says: "In such phrases as anybody else, and the like, *else* is often put in the possessive case; as, 'anybody else's servant'; and some grammarians defend this use of the possessive case, arguing that *somebody else* is a compound noun." It is better grammar and more euphonious to consider *else* as being an adjective, and to form the possessive by adding the apostrophe and *s* to the word that *else* qualifies; thus, anybody's else, nobody's else, somebody's else.

**Anyhow.** "An exceedingly vulgar phrase," says Professor Mathews, in his "Words: Their Use and Abuse." "Its use, *in any manner*, by one who professes to write and speak the English tongue with purity, is unpardonable."

Professor Mathews seems to have a special dislike for this colloquialism. It is recognized by the lexicographers, and I think is generally accounted, even by the careful, permissible in conversation, though incompatible with dignified diction.

**Anxiety of Mind.** See EQUANIMITY OF MIND.

**Apostrophe.** Turning from the person or persons to whom a discourse is addressed and appealing to some person or thing absent, constitutes what, in rhetoric, is called the *apostrophe*. The following are some examples:

"O gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?"

"Sail on, thou lone imperial bird
Of quenchless eye and tireless wing!"

"Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe:
All may yet be well!"

**Appear.** See SEEM.

**Appreciate.** If any word in the language has cause to complain of ill-treatment, this one has. *Appreciate* means, to estimate *justly*—to set the *true* value on men or things, their worth, beauty, or advantages of any sort whatsoever. Thus, an overestimate is no more *appreciation* than is an underestimate; hence it follows that such expressions as, "I appreciate it, or her, or him, *highly*," can not be correct. We *value*, or *prize*, things highly, not *appreciate* them highly. This word is also very improperly made to do service for *rise*, or *increase*, in value; thus, "Land *appreciates* rapidly in the West." Dr. L. T. Townsend

blunders in the use of *appreciate* in his "Art of Speech," vol. i, p. 142, thus: "The laws of harmony . . . may allow copiousness . . . in parts of a discourse . . . in order that the condensation of other parts may be the *more highly appreciated*."

**Apprehend—Comprehend.** The English often use the first of these two words where we use the second. Both express an effort of the thinking faculty; but to *apprehend* is simply to take an idea into the mind—it is the mind's first effort—while to *comprehend* is *fully to understand*. We are dull or quick of *apprehension*. Children *apprehend* much that they do not *comprehend*. Trench says: "We *apprehend* many truths which we do not *comprehend*." "*Apprehend*," says Crabb, "expresses the weakest kind of belief, the having [of] the least idea of the presence of a thing."

**Apt.** Often misused for *likely*, and sometimes for *liable*. "What is he *apt* to be doing?" "Where shall I be *apt* to find him?" "If properly directed, it will be *apt* to reach me." In such sentences as these, *likely* is the proper word to use. "If you go there, you will be *apt* to get into trouble." Here either *likely* or *liable* is the proper word, according to the thought the speaker would convey.

**Arctics.** See RUBBERS.

**Artist.** Of late years this word has been appropriated by the members of so many crafts, that it has wellnigh been despoiled of its meaning. Your cook, your barber, your tailor, your boot-maker, and so on to satiety, are all *artists*. Painters, sculptors, architects, actors, and singers, nowadays, generally prefer being thus called, rather than to be spoken of as *artists*.

**As.** "Not *as* I know": read, "not *that* I know." "This is not *as* good as the last": read, "not *so* good."

"It may be complete *so* far as the specification is concerned": correctly, "*as* far as."

*As*, preceded by *such* or by *same*, has the force of a relative applying to persons or to things. "He offered me the *same* conditions *as* he offered you." "The same conditions *that*" would be equally proper. See, also, LIKE.

**Ascribe.** See IMPUTE.

**At.** Things are sold *by*, not *at*, auction. "The scene is more beautiful *at* night than by day": say, "*by* night."

**At all.** "It is not strange, for my uncle is King of Denmark." Had Shakespeare written, "It is not *at all* strange," it is clear that his diction would have been much less forcible. "I do not wish for any *at all*"; "I saw no one *at all*"; "If he had any desire *at all* to see me, he would come where I am." The *at all* in sentences like these is superfluous. Yet there are instances in which the phrase is certainly a very convenient one, and seems to be unobjectionable. It is much used, and by good writers.

**At best.** Instead of *at best* and *at worst*, we should say at *the* best and at *the* worst.

**At last.** See AT LENGTH.

**At least.** This adverbial phrase is often misplaced. "'The Romans understood liberty *at least* as well as we.' This must be interpreted to mean, 'The Romans understood liberty *as well as we* understand liberty.' The intended meaning is, 'that whatever things the Romans failed to understand, they understood *liberty*.' To express this meaning we might put it thus: 'The Romans understood *at least* liberty as well as we *do*'; 'liberty, *at least*, the Romans understood as well as we do.' 'A tear, *at least*, is due to the unhappy'; '*at least* a tear is due to the unhappy'; 'a tear is due *at least* to the unhappy'; 'a tear is due to the unhappy *at least*'—all express different mean-

ings. 'This can not, *often at least*, be done'; 'this can not be done *often*, *at least*.' (1. 'It often happens that this can not be done.' 2. 'It does not often happen that this can be done.') So, 'man is *always* capable of laughing'; 'man is capable of laughing *always*.'"—Bain.

**At length.** This phrase is often used instead of *at last*. "*At length* we managed to get away": read, "*at last*." "*At length* we heard from him." To hear from any one *at length* is to hear fully; i. e., in detail.

**Authoress.** With regard to the use of this and certain other words of like formation, Mr. Gould, in his "Good English," says: "*Poet* means simply a person who writes poetry; and *author*, in the sense under consideration, a person who writes poetry or prose—not a *man* who writes, but a *person* who writes. Nothing in either word indicates sex; and everybody knows that the functions of both poets and authors are common to both sexes. Hence, *authoress* and *poetess* are superfluous. And they are superfluous, also, in another respect—that they are very rarely used, indeed they hardly *can* be used, independently of the *name* of the writer, as Mrs., or Miss, or a female Christian name. They are, besides, philological absurdities, because they are fabricated on the false assumption that their primaries indicate *men*. They are, moreover, liable to the charge of affectation and prettiness, to say nothing of pedantic pretension to accuracy.

"If the *ess* is to be permitted, there is no reason for excluding it from *any* noun that indicates a person; and the next editions of our dictionaries may be made complete by the addition of *writress*, *officeress*, *manageress*, *superintendentess*, *secretaryess*, *treasureress*, *walkeress*, *talkeress*, and so on to the end of the vocabulary."

**Avocation.** See VOCATION.

**Bad cold.** Inasmuch as colds are never *good*, why say a *bad* cold? We may talk about *slight* colds and *severe* colds, but not about *bad* colds.

**Baggage.** See LUGGAGE.

**Balance.** This word is very frequently and very erroneously used in the sense of *rest*, *remainder*. It properly means *the excess of one thing over another*, and in this sense and in no other should it be used. Hence it is improper to talk about the *balance* of the edition, of the evening, of the money, of the toasts, of the men, etc. In such cases we should say the *rest* or the *remainder*.

**Barbarism.** Defined as an offense against good usage, by the use of an improper word, i. e., a word that is antiquated or improperly formed. *Preventative*, *enthuse*, *agriculturalist*, *donate*, etc., are barbarisms. See also SOLECISM.

**Been to.** We not unfrequently hear a superfluous *to* tacked to a sentence; thus, "Where have you been *to?*"

**Beg.** We often see letters begin with the words, "I *beg* to acknowledge the receipt of your favor," etc. We should write, "I *beg leave* to acknowledge," etc. No one would say, "I beg to tell you," instead of, "I beg *leave* to tell you."

**Begin — Commence.** These words have the same meaning; careful speakers, however, generally prefer to use the former. Indeed, there is rarely any good reason for giving the preference to the latter. See also COMMENCE.

**Being built.** See IS BEING BUILT.

**Belongings.** An old idiomatic expression now coming into use again.

**Beside—Besides.** In the later unabridged editions of Webster's dictionary we find the following remarks concerning the use of these two words: "*Beside* and *besides*,

whether used as prepositions or adverbs, have been considered synonymous from an early period of our literature, and have been freely interchanged by our best writers. There is, however, a tendency in present usage to make the following distinction between them: 1. That *beside* be used only and always as a preposition, with the original meaning *by the side of;* as, to sit *beside* a fountain; or with the closely allied meaning *aside from*, or *out of;* as, this is *beside* our present purpose: 'Paul, thou art *beside* thyself.' The adverbial sense to be wholly transferred to the cognate word. 2. That *besides*, as a preposition, take the remaining sense, *in addition to;* as, *besides* all this; *besides* the consideration here offered: 'There was a famine in the land *besides* the first famine.' And that it also take the adverbial sense of *moreover*, *beyond*, etc., which had been divided between the words; as, *besides*, there are other considerations which belong to this case."

**Best.** See AT BEST.

**Between.** This word is often misused for *among;* thus, "The word *fellow*, however much in use it may be *between* men, sounds very objectionable from the lips of women."—"London Queen." Should be, "*among* men." *Between* is used in reference to two things, parties, or persons; *among*, in reference to a greater number. "Castor and Pollux with one soul *between* them." "You have *among* you many a purchased slave."

**Blame it on.** Here is a gross vulgarism which we sometimes hear from persons of considerable culture. They use it in the sense of *accuse* or *suspect;* thus, "He *blames it on* his brother," meaning that he *accuses* or *suspects* his brother of having done it, or of being at fault for it.

**Bogus.** A colloquial term incompatible with dignified diction.

**Both.** We sometimes hear such absurd sentences as, "They *both* resemble each other very much"; "They are *both* alike"; "They *both* met in the street." *Both* is likewise redundant in the following sentence: "It performs at the same time the offices *both* of the nominative and objective cases."

**Bound.** The use of this word in the sense of *determined* is not only inelegant but indefensible. "I am *bound* to have it," should be, "I am *determined* to have it."

**Bravery—Courage.** The careless often use these two words as though they were interchangeable. *Bravery* is inborn, is instinctive; *courage* is the product of reason, calculation. There is much merit in being courageous, little merit in being brave. Men who are simply *brave* are careless, while the courageous man is always cautious. *Bravery* often degenerates into temerity. *Moral courage* is that firmness of principle which enables a man to do what he deems to be his duty, although his action may subject him to adverse criticism. True *moral courage* is one of the rarest and most admirable of virtues.

Alfred the Great, in resisting the attacks of the Danes, displayed *bravery;* in entering their camp as a spy, he displayed *courage.*

**Bring—Fetch—Carry.** The indiscriminate use of these three words is very common. To *bring* is to convey to or toward—a simple act; to *fetch* means to *go* and bring—a compound act; to *carry* often implies motion from the speaker, and is followed by *away* or *off*, and thus is opposed to *bring* and *fetch.* Yet one hears such expressions as, "Go to Mrs. D.'s and *bring* her this bundle; and here, you may *fetch* her this book also." We use the words correctly thus: "*Fetch*, or *go bring*, me an apple from the cellar";

"When you come home *bring* some lemons"; "*Carry* this book home with you."

**British against American English.** "The most important peculiarity of American English is a laxity, irregularity, and confusion in the use of particles. The same thing is, indeed, observable in England, but not to the same extent, though some gross departures from idiomatic propriety, such as *different to* for *different from*, are common in England, which none but very ignorant persons would be guilty of in America. . . . In the tenses of the verbs, I am inclined to think that well-educated Americans conform more closely to grammatical propriety than the corresponding class in England. . . . In general, I think we may say that, in point of naked syntactical accuracy, the English of America is not at all inferior to that of England; but we do not discriminate so precisely in the meaning of words, nor do we habitually, in either conversation or in writing, express ourselves so gracefully, or employ so classic a diction, as the English. Our taste in language is less fastidious, and our licenses and inaccuracies are more frequently of a character indicative of want of refinement and elegant culture than those we hear in educated society in England."—George P. Marsh.

**British against American Orthoëpy.** "The causes of the differences in pronunciation [between the English and the Americans] are partly physical, and therefore difficult, if not impossible, to resist; and partly owing to a difference of circumstances. Of this latter class of influences, the universality of reading in America is the most obvious and important. The most marked difference is, perhaps, in the length or prosodical quantity of the vowels; and both of the causes I have mentioned concur to produce this effect. We are said to drawl our words by protracting the

vowels and giving them a more diphthongal sound than the English. Now, an Englishman who reads will habitually utter his vowels more fully and distinctly than his countryman who does not; and, upon the same principle, a nation of readers, like the Americans, will pronounce more deliberately and clearly than a people so large a proportion of whom are unable to read, as in England. From our universal habit of reading, there results not only a greater distinctness of articulation, but a strong tendency to assimilate the spoken to the written language. Thus, Americans incline to give to every syllable of a written word a distinct enunciation; and the popular habit is to say *dic-tion-ar-y*, *mil-it-ar-y*, with a secondary accent on the penultimate, instead of sinking the third syllable, as is so common in England. There is, no doubt, something disagreeably stiff in an anxious and affected conformity to the very letter of orthography; and to those accustomed to a more hurried utterance we may seem to drawl, when we are only giving a full expression to letters which, though etymologically important, the English habitually slur over, sputtering out, as a Swedish satirist says, one half of the word, and swallowing the other. The tendency to make the long vowels diphthongal is noticed by foreigners as a peculiarity of the orthoëpy of our language; and this tendency will, of course, be strengthened by any cause which produces greater slowness and fullness of articulation. Besides the influence of the habit of reading, there is some reason to think that climate is affecting our articulation. In spite of the coldness of our winters, our flora shows that the climate of even our Northern States belongs, upon the whole, to a more southern type than that of England. In southern latitudes, at least within the temperate zone, articulation is generally much more distinct than in the northern regions. Witness

the pronunciation of Spanish, Italian, Turkish, as compared with English, Danish, and German. Participating, then, in the physical influences of a southern climate, we have contracted something of the more distinct articulation that belongs to a dry atmosphere and a clear sky. And this view of the case is confirmed by the fact that the inhabitants of the Southern States incline, like the people of southern Europe, to throw the accent toward the end of the word, and thus, like all nations that use that accentuation, bring out all the syllables. This we observe very commonly in the comparative Northern and Southern pronunciation of proper names. I might exemplify by citing familiar instances; but, lest that should seem invidious, it may suffice to say that, not to mention more important changes, many a Northern member of Congress goes to Washington a *dactyl* or a *trochee*, and comes home an *amphibrach* or an *iambus*. Why or how external physical causes, as climate and modes of life, should affect pronunciation, we can not say; but it is evident that material influences of some sort are producing a change in our bodily constitution, and we are fast acquiring a distinct national Anglo-American type. That the delicate organs of articulation should participate in such tendencies is altogether natural; and the operation of the causes which give rise to them is palpable even in our handwriting, which, if not uniform with itself, is generally, nevertheless, so unlike common English script as to be readily distinguished from it.

"To the joint operation, then, of these two causes—universal reading and climatic influences—we must ascribe our habit of dwelling upon vowel and diphthongal sounds, or of drawling, if that term is insisted upon. . . . But it is often noticed by foreigners as both making us more readily understood by them when speaking our own tongue, and as

connected with a flexibility of organ, which enables us to acquire a better pronunciation of other languages than is usual with Englishmen. In any case, as, in spite of the old adage, speech is given us that we may make ourselves understood, our drawling, however prolonged, is preferable to the nauseous, foggy, mumbling thickness of articulation which characterizes the cockney, and is not unfrequently affected by Englishmen of a better class."—George P. Marsh.

**Bryant's Prohibited Words.** See INDEX EXPURGATORIUS.

**But.** This word is misused in various ways. "I do not doubt *but* he will be here": read, doubt *that*. "I should not wonder *but*": read, *if*. "I have no doubt *but* that he will go": suppress *but*. "I do not doubt *but* that it is true": suppress *but*. "There can be no doubt *but* that the burglary is the work of professional cracksmen."—"New York Herald." Doubt *that*, and not *but that*. "A careful canvass leaves no doubt *but* that the nomination," etc.: suppress *but*. "There is no reasonable doubt *but* that it is all it professes to be": suppress *but*. "The mind no sooner entertains any proposition *but* it presently hastens," etc.: read, *than*. "No other resource *but* this was allowed him": read, *than*.

**By.** See AT.

**Calculate.** This word means to ascertain by computation, to reckon, to estimate; and, say some of the purists, it never means anything else when properly used. *If this is true*, we can not say a thing is *calculated* to do harm, but must, if we are ambitious to have our English irreproachable, choose some other form of expression, or at least some other word, *likely* or *apt*, for example. Cobbett, however, says, "That, to Her, whose great example is so well *cal-*

*culated* to inspire," etc.; and, "The first two of the three sentences are well enough *calculated* for ushering," etc. *Calculate* is sometimes vulgarly used for *intend*, *purpose*, *expect;* as, "He *calculates* to get off to-morrow."

**Caliber.** This word is sometimes used very absurdly; as, "Brown's Essays are of a much higher *caliber* than Smith's." It is plain that the proper word to use here is *order*.

**Cant.** *Cant* is a kind of affectation; affectation is an effort to sail under false colors; an effort to sail under false colors is a kind of falsehood; and falsehood is a term of Latin origin which we often use instead of the stronger Saxon term LYING!

"Who is not familiar," writes Dr. William Matthews, "with scores of pet phrases and cant terms which are repeated at this day apparently without a thought of their meaning? Who ever attended a missionary meeting without hearing 'the Macedonian cry,' and an account of some 'little interest' and 'fields white for the harvest'? Who is not weary of the ding-dong of 'our Zion,' and the solecism of 'in our midst'; and who does not long for a verbal millennium when Christians shall no longer 'feel to take' and 'grant to give'?"

"How much I regret," says Coleridge, "that so many religious persons of the present day think it necessary to adopt a certain cant of manner and phraseology [and of tone of voice] as a token to each other [one another]! They *improve* this and that text, and they must do so and so in a prayerful way; and so on."

**Capacity.** See ABILITY.

**Caption.** This word is often used for *heading*, but, thus used, it is condemned by careful writers. The true meaning of *caption* is a seizure, an arrest. It does not come from

a Latin word meaning *a head*, but from a Latin word meaning *to seize*.

**Caret.** Cobbett writes of the caret to his son: "The last thing I shall mention under this head is the *caret* [ ^ ], which is used to point upward to a part which has been omitted, and which is inserted between the line where the caret is placed and the line above it. Things should be called by their right names, and this should be called the *blunder-mark*. I would have you, my dear James, scorn the use of the thing. *Think* before you write; let it be your custom to *write correctly* and in a *plain hand*. Be careful that neatness, grammar, and sense prevail when you write to a blacksmith about shoeing a horse as when you write on the most important subjects. Habit is powerful in all cases; but its power in this case is truly wonderful. When you write, bear constantly in mind that some one is to *read* and to *understand* what you write. This will make your handwriting and also your meaning *plain*. Far, I hope, from my dear James will be the ridiculous, the contemptible affectation of writing in a slovenly or illegible hand, or that of signing his name otherwise than in plain letters."

**Carry.** See BRING.

**Case.** Many persons of considerable culture continually make mistakes in conversation in the use of the cases, and we sometimes meet with gross errors of this kind in the writings of authors of repute. Witness the following: "And everybody is to know him except *I*."—George Meredeth in "The Tragic Comedies," Eng. ed., vol. i, p. 33. "Let's you and *I* go": say, *me*. We can not say, Let *I* go. Properly, Let's go, i. e., let us go, or, let you and *me* go. "He is as good as *me*": say, as *I*. "She is as tall as *him*": say, as *he*. "You are older than *me*": say, than *I*. "Nobody said so but *he*": say, but *him*. "Every one can

master a grief but *he* that hath it": correctly, but *him*. "John went out with James and *I*": say, and *me*. "You are stronger than *him*": say, than *he*. "Between you and *I*": say, and *me*. "Between you and *they*": say, and *them*. "He gave it to John and *I*": say, and *me*. "You told John and *I*": say, and *me*. "He sat between him and *I*": say, and *me*. "He expects to see you and *I*": say, and *me*. "You were a dunce to do it. Who? *me?*" say, *I*. Supply the ellipsis, and we should have, Who? *me* a dunce to do it? "Where are you going? Who? *me?*" say, *I*. We can't say, *me* going. "*Who* do you mean?" say, *whom*. "Was it *them?*" say, *they*. "If I *was him*, I would do it": say, *were he*. "If I *was her*, I would not go": say, *were she*. "Was it *him?*" say, *he*. "Was it *her?*" say, *she*. "For the benefit of those *whom* he thought were his friends": say, *who*. This error is not easy to detect on account of the parenthetical words that follow it. If we drop them, the mistake is very apparent; thus, "For the benefit of those *whom* were his friends."

"On the supposition," says Bain, "that the interrogative *who* has *whom* for its objective, the following are errors: '*who* do you take me to be?' '*who* should I meet the other day?' '*who* is it by?' '*who* did you give it to?' '*who* to?' '*who* for?' But, considering that these expressions *occur with the best writers and speakers*, that they *are more energetic* than the other form, and that they *lead to no ambiguity*, it may be doubted whether grammarians have not exceeded their province in condemning them."

Cobbett, in writing of the pronouns, says: "When the relatives are placed in the sentence at a distance from their antecedents or verbs or prepositions, the ear gives us no assistance. '*Who*, of all the men in the world, do you

think I *saw* to-day?' '*Who*, for the sake of numerous services, the office was given to.' In both these cases it should be *whom*. Bring the verb in the first and the preposition in the second case closer to the relative, as, *who I saw, to who the office was given*, and you see the error at once. But take care! '*Whom*, of all the men in the world, do you think, *was* chosen to be sent as an ambassador?' '*Whom*, for the sake of his numerous services, *had* an office of honor bestowed upon him.' These are nominative cases, and ought to have *who*; that is to say, *who was chosen, who had an office.*"

"Most grammarians," says Dr. Bain, in his "Higher English Grammar," "have laid down this rule: 'The verb *to be* has the same case after as before it.' Macaulay censures the following as a solecism: 'It was *him* that Horace Walpole called a man who never made a bad figure but as an author.' Thackeray similarly adverts to the same deviation from the rule: '"Is that *him?*" said the lady in *questionable grammar.*' But, notwithstanding this," continues Dr. Bain, "we certainly hear in the actual speech of all classes of society such expressions as 'it was *me*,' 'it was *him*,' 'it was *her*,' more frequently than the prescribed form.* 'This shy creature, my brother says, is *me*'; 'were it *me*, I'd show him the difference.'—Clarissa Harlowe. 'It is not *me*† you are in love with.'—Addison. 'If there is one character more base than another, it is *him* who,' etc.—Sydney Smith. 'If I were *him*'; 'if I had been *her*,' etc. The authority of good writers is strong on the side of objective forms.

* If this is true in England, it is not true in America. Nowhere in the United States is such "questionable grammar" as this frequently heard in cultivated circles.

† "It may be confidently affirmed that with good speakers, in the case of negation, *not me* is the usual practice."—Bain. This, I confidently affirm, is not true in America.—A. A.

There is also the analogy of the French language; for while 'I am here' is *je suis ici*, the answer to 'who is there?' is *moi* (me); and *c'est moi* (it is *me*) is the legitimate phrase—never *c'est je* (it is I)."

But *moi*, according to all French grammarians, is very often in the nominative case. *Moi* is in the nominative case when used in reply to "Who is there?" and also in the phrase "C'est moi," which makes "It is *I*" the correct translation of the phrase, and not "It is *me*." The French equivalent of "I! I am here," is "Moi! je suis ici." The Frenchman uses *moi* in the nominative case when *je* would be inharmonious. Euphony with him is a matter of more importance than grammatical correctness. Bescherelle gives many examples of *moi* in the nominative. Here are two of them: "Mon avocat et moi sommes de cet avis. Qui veut aller avec lui? Moi." If we use such phraseology as "It is *me*," we must do as the French do—consider *me* as being in the nominative case, and offer *euphony* as our reason for thus using it.

When shall we put nouns (or pronouns) preceding verbal, or participial, nouns, as they are called by some grammarians—infinitives in *ing*, as they are called by others—in the possessive case?

"'I am surprised at *John's* (or *his*, *your*, etc.) *refusing* to go.' 'I am surprised at *John* (or *him*, *you*, etc.) *refusing* to go.' [In the latter sentence *refusing* is a participle.] The latter construction is not so common with pronouns as with nouns, especially with such nouns as do not readily take the possessive form. 'They prevented *him going* forward': better, 'They prevented *his going* forward.' 'He was dismissed without any *reason being* assigned.' 'The boy died through his *clothes being* burned.' 'We hear little of any *connection being* kept up between the two nations.'

'The men rowed vigorously for fear of the *tide turning* against us.' *But most examples of the construction without the possessive form are* OBVIOUSLY DUE TO MERE SLOVENLINESS. . . . 'In case of *your being* absent': here *being* is an infinitive [verbal, or participial, noun] qualified by the possessive *your*. 'In case of *you being* present': here *being* would have to be construed as a participle. *The possessive construction is, in this case, the primitive and regular construction;* THE OTHER IS A MERE LAPSE. The difficulty of adhering to the possessive form occurs when the subject is not a person: 'It does not seem safe to rely on the rule of *demand* creating supply': in strictness, '*Demand's* creating supply.' 'A petition was presented against the *license being* granted.' But for the awkwardness of extending the possessive to impersonal subjects, it would be right to say, 'against the *license's being* granted.' 'He had conducted the ball without any *complaint being* urged against him.' The possessive would be suitable, but undesirable and unnecessary."—Professor Alexander Bain.

"Though the *ordinary* syntax of the possessive case is sufficiently plain and easy, there is, perhaps, among all the puzzling and disputable points of grammar, nothing more difficult of decision than are some questions that occur respecting the right management of this case. The observations that have been made show that possessives before participles are seldom to be approved. The following example is manifestly inconsistent with itself; and, *in my opinion, the three possessives are all wrong:* 'The kitchen, too, now begins to give dreadful note of preparation; not from *armorers* accomplishing the knights, but from the *shopmaid's* chopping force-meat, the *apprentice's* cleaning knives, and the *journeyman's* receiving a practical lesson in

the art of waiting at table.' 'The daily instances of *men's* dying around us.' Say rather, 'Of *men* dying around us.' The leading word in sense ought not to be made the adjunct in construction."—Goold Brown.

**Casualty.** This word is often heard with the incorrect addition of a syllable, *casuality*, which is not recognized by the lexicographers. Some writers object to the word casualty, and always use its synonym *accident*.

**Celebrity.** "A number of *celebrities* witnessed the first representation." This word is frequently used, especially in the newspapers, as a concrete term; but it would be better to use it in its abstract sense only, and in sentences like the one above to say *distinguished persons*.

**Character—Reputation.** These two words are not synonyms, though often used as such. *Character* means the sum of distinguishing qualities. "Actions, looks, words, steps, form the alphabet by which you may spell characters."—Lavater. *Reputation* means the estimation in which one is held. One's reputation, then, is what is thought of one's character; consequently, one may have a good reputation and a bad character, or a good character and a bad reputation. Calumny may injure *reputation*, but not *character*. Sir Peter does not leave his *character* behind him, but his *reputation*—his *good name*.

**Cheap.** The dictionaries define this adjective as meaning, bearing a low price, or to be had at a low price; but nowadays good usage makes it mean that a thing may be had, or has been sold, at a bargain. Hence, in order to make sure of being understood, it is better to say *low-priced*, when one means low-priced, than to use the word *cheap*. What is low-priced, as everybody knows, is often *dear*, and what is high-priced is often *cheap*. A diamond necklace

might be *cheap* at ten thousand dollars, and a pinchbeck necklace dear at ten dollars.

**Cherubim.** The Hebrew plural of *cherub*. "We are authorized," says Dr. Campbell, "both by use and analogy, to say either *cherubs* and *seraphs*, according to the English idiom, or *cherubim* and *seraphim*, according to the Oriental. The former suits better the familiar, the latter the solemn, style. As the words *cherubim* and *seraphim* are plural, the terms *cherubims* and *seraphims*, as expressing the plural, are quite improper."—"Philosophy of Rhetoric."

**Citizen.** This word properly means one who has certain political rights; when, therefore, it is used, as it often is, to designate persons who may be aliens, it, to say the least, betrays a want of care in the selection of words. "Several *citizens* were injured by the explosion." Here some other word—*persons*, for example—should be used.

**Clever.** In this country the word *clever* is most improperly used in the sense of good-natured, well-disposed, good-hearted. It is properly used in the sense in which we are wont most inelegantly to use the word *smart*, though it is a less colloquial term, and is of wider application. In England the phrase "a *clever* man" is the equivalent of the French phrase, "*un homme d'esprit*." The word is properly used in the following sentences: "Every work of Archbishop Whately must be an object of interest to the admirers of *clever* reasoning"; "Cobbett's letter . . . very *clever*, but very mischievous"; "Bonaparte was certainly as *clever* a man as ever lived."

**Climax.** A clause, a sentence, a paragraph, or any literary composition whatsoever, is said to end with a *climax* when, by an artistic arrangement, the more effective is made to follow the less effective in regular gradation. Any great departure from the order of ascending strength

is called an *anti-climax*. Here are some examples of climax :

"Give all diligence ; add to your faith, virtue ; and to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

"What is every year of a wise man's life but a criticism on the past ! Those whose life is the shortest live long enough to laugh at one half of it ; the boy despises the infant, the man the boy, the sage both, and the Christian all."

"What a piece of work is man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculties ! in form and moving, how express and admirable ! in action, how like an angel ! in apprehension, how like a god !"

**Co.** The prefix *co* should be used only when the word to which it is joined begins with a vowel, as in *co-eval*, *co-incident*, *co-operate*, etc. *Con* is used when the word begins with a consonant, as in *con-temporary*, *con-junction*, etc. *Co-partner* is an exception to the rule.

**Commence.** The Britons use or misuse this word in a manner peculiar to themselves. They say, for example, "commenced merchant," "commenced actor," "commenced politician," and so on. Dr. Hall tells us that *commence* has been employed in the sense of "begin to be," "become," "set up as," by first-class writers, for more than two centuries. Careful speakers make small use of *commence* in any sense ; they prefer to use its Saxon equivalent, *begin*. See, also, BEGIN.

**Comparison.** When only two objects are compared, the comparative and not the superlative degree should be used ; thus, "Mary is the *older* of the two" ; "John is the

*stronger* of the two"; "Brown is the *richer* of the two, and the *richest* man in the city"; "Which is the *more* desirable, health or wealth?" "Which is the *most* desirable, health, wealth, or genius?"

"Of two such lessons, why forget
The *nobler* and the *manlier* one?"

**Completed.** This word is often incorrectly used for *finished*. That is *complete* which lacks nothing; that is *finished* which has had all done to it that was intended. The builder of a house may *finish* it and yet leave it very *incomplete*.

**Condign.** It is safe to say that most of those who use this word do not know its meaning, which is, suitable, deserved, merited, proper. "His endeavors shall not lack *condign* praise"; i. e., his endeavors shall not lack *proper* or their *merited* praise. "A villain *condignly* punished" is a villain punished *according to his deserts*. To use *condign* in the sense of *severe* is just as incorrect as it would be to use *deserved* or *merited* in the sense of *severe*.

**Confirmed Invalid.** This phrase is a convenient mode of expressing the idea it conveys, but it is difficult to defend, inasmuch as *confirmed* means strengthened, established.

**Consequence.** This word is sometimes used instead of *importance* or *moment*; as, "They were all persons of more or less *consequence*": read, "of more or less *importance*." "It is a matter of no *consequence*": read, "of no *moment*."

**Consider.** "This word," says Mr. Richard Grant White, in his "Words and Their Uses," "is perverted from its true meaning by most of those who use it." *Consider* means, to meditate, to deliberate, to reflect, to revolve in the mind; and yet it is made to do service for

*think*, *suppose*, and *regard*. Thus: "I *consider* his course very unjustifiable"; "I have always *considered* it my duty," etc.; "I *consider* him as being the cleverest man of my acquaintance."

**Contemptible.** This word is sometimes used for *contemptuous*. An old story says that a man once said to Dr. Parr, "Sir, I have a *contemptible* opinion of you." "That does not surprise me," returned the Doctor; "all your opinions are *contemptible*." What is worthless or weak is *contemptible*. Despicable is a word that expresses a still more intense degree of the contemptible. A traitor is a *despicable* character, while a poltroon is only *contemptible*.

**Continually.** See PERPETUALLY.

**Continue on.** The *on* in this phrase is generally superfluous. "We continued on our way" is idiomatic English, and is more euphonious than the sentence would be without the particle. The meaning is, "We continued to travel *on* our way." In such sentences, however, as "Continue *on*," "He continued to read *on*," "The fever continued *on* for some hours," and the like, the *on* generally serves no purpose.

**Conversationist.** This word is to be preferred to *conversationalist*. Mr. Richard Grant White says that *conversationalist* and *agriculturalist* are inadmissible. On the other hand, Dr. Fitzedward Hall says: "As for *conversationist* and *conversationalist*, *agriculturist* and *agriculturalist*, as all are alike legitimate formations, it is for convention to decide which we are to prefer.

**Convoke—Convene.** At one time and another there has been some discussion with regard to the correct use of these two words. According to Crabb, "There is nothing imperative on the part of those that *assemble*, or *convene*, and nothing binding on those *assembled*, or *convened*: one

*assembles*, or *convenes*, by invitation or request ; one attends to the notice or not, at pleasure. *Convoke*, on the other hand, is *an act of authority ;* it is the call of one who has the authority to give the call ; it is heeded by those who feel themselves bound to attend." Properly, then, President Arthur *convokes*, not *convenes*, the Senate.

**Corporeal—Corporal.** These adjectives, though regarded as synonyms, are not used indiscriminately. *Corporal* is used in reference to the body, or animal frame, in its proper sense ; *corporeal*, to the animal substance in an extended sense—opposed to spiritual. *Corporal* punishment ; *corporeal* or *material* form or substance.

> "That to *corporeal* substances could add
> Speed most spiritual."—Milton.
>
> "What seemed *corporal*
> Melted as breath into the wind."—Shakespeare.

**Couple.** In its primitive signification, this word does not mean simply two, but two that are united by some bond ; such as, for example, the tie that unites the sexes. It has, however, been so long used to mean two of a kind considered together, that in this sense it may be deemed permissible, though the substitution of the word *two* for it would often materially improve the diction.

**Courage.** See BRAVERY.

**Crime—Vice—Sin.** The confusion that exists in the use of these words is due largely to an imperfect understanding of their respective meanings. *Crime* is the violation of the law of a state ; hence, as the laws of states differ, what is crime in one state may not be crime in another. *Vice* is a course of wrong-doing, and is not modified either by country, religion, or condition. As for *sin*, it is very difficult to define what it is, as what is sinful in the eyes of one man may not be sinful in the eyes of another ; what is

sinful in the eyes of a Jew may not be sinful in the eyes of a Christian; and what is sinful in the eyes of a Christian of one country may not be sinful in the eyes of a Christian of another country. In the days of slavery, to harbor a runaway slave was a *crime*, but it was, in the eyes of most people, neither a *vice* nor a *sin*.

**Crushed out.** "The rebellion was finally *crushed out*." Out of what? We may *crush* the life out of a man, or *crush* a man to death, and *crush*, not *crush out*, a rebellion.

**Cultured.** This word is said to be a produet of Boston—an excellent place for anybody or anything to eome from. Many persons object to its use on the ground that there can be no such partieipial adjective, beeause there is no verb in use from which to form it. We have in use the substantive *culture*, but, though the dictionaries recognize the verb *to culture*, we do not use it. Be this objection valid or be it not, *cultured* having but two syllables, while its synonym *cultivated* has four, it is likely to find favor with those who employ short words when they convey their meaning as well as long ones. Other adjectives of this kind are, moneyed, whiskered, slippered, lettered, talented, cottaged, lilied, anguished, gifted, and so forth.

**Curious.** This word is often used instead of *strange* or *remarkable*. "A *curious* faet": better, "a *remarkable* fact." "A *curious* proceeding": better, "a *strange* proceeding."

**Dangerous.** "He is pretty sick, but not *dangerous*." Dangerous people are generally most dangerous when they are most vigorous. Say, rather, "He is sick, but not *in danger*."

**Dearest.** "A gentleman once began a letter to his

bride thus: 'My *dearest* Maria.' The lady replied: 'My dear John, I beg that you will mend either your morals or your grammar. You call me your "*dearest* Maria"; am I to understand that you have other Marias'?"—Moon's "Bad English."

**Deceiving.** "You are *deceiving* me." Not unfrequently *deceiving* is used when the speaker means *trying to deceive*. It is when we do not suspect deception that we are deceived.

**Decimate.** This word, meaning as it properly does to tithe, to take the tenth part, is hardly permissible in the sense in which it is used in such sentences as, "The regiment held its position, though terribly *decimated* by the enemy's artillery." "Though terribly *tithed*" would be equally correct.

**Demean.** This word is sometimes erroneously used in the sense of *to debase*, *to disgrace*, *to humble*. It is a reflexive verb, and its true meaning is *to behave*, *to carry*, *to conduct*; as, "He *demeans himself* in a gentlemanly manner," i. e., He *behaves*, or *carries*, or *conducts*, himself in a gentlemanly manner.

**Denude.** "The vulture," says Brande, "has some part of the head and sometimes of the neck *denuded* of feathers." Most birds might be *denuded* of the feathers on their heads; not so, however, the vulture, for his head is always featherless. A thing can not be *denuded* of what it does not have. Denuding a vulture's head and neck of the feathers is like *denuding* an eel of its scales.

**Deprecate.** Strangely enough, this word is often used in the sense of disapprove, censure, condemn; as, "He *deprecates* the whole proceeding"; "Your course, from first to last, is universally *deprecated*." But, according to the authorities, the word really means, to endeavor to

avert by prayer; to pray exemption or deliverance from; to beg off; to entreat; to urge against.

"Daniel kneeled upon his knees to *deprecate* the captivity of his people."—Hewyt.

**Despite.** This word is often incorrectly preceded by *in* and followed by *of*; thus, "*In* despite *of* all our efforts to detain him, he set out"; which should be, "Despite all our efforts," etc., or "*In spite of* all our efforts," etc.

**Determined.** See BOUND.

**Diction.** This is a general term, and is applicable to a single sentence or to a connected composition. *Bad diction* may be due to errors in grammar, to a confused disposition of words, or to an improper use of words. *Diction*, to be good, requires to be only correct and clear. Of excellent examples of bad diction there are very many in a little work by Dr. L. T. Townsend, Professor of Sacred Rhetoric in Boston University, the first volume of which has lately come under my notice. The first ten lines of Dr. Townsend's preface are:

"The leading genius[1] of the People's College at Chautauqua Lake, with a [the ?] view of providing for his course[2] a text-book, asked for the publication of the following laws and principles of speech.[3]

"The author, not seeing sufficient reason[4] for withholding what had been of much practical benefit[5] to himself, consented.[6]

"The subject-matter herein contained is an outgrowth from[7] occasional instructions[8] given[9] while occupying the chair[10] of Sacred Rhetoric."

1. The phrase *leading genius* is badly chosen. Founder, projector, head, organizer, principal, or president—some one of these terms would probably have been appropriate. 2. What course? Race-course, course of ethics, æsthetics,

rhetoric, or what?* 3. "The following laws and principles of speech." And how came these laws and principles in existence? Who made them? We are to infer, it would seem, that Professor Townsend made them, and that the world would have had to go without the laws that govern language and the principles on which language is formed had it pleased Professor Townsend to withhold them. 4. "*Sufficient* reason"! Then there were reasons why Professor Townsend ought to have kept these good things all to himself; only, they were not *sufficient*. 5. "Practical benefit"! Is there any such thing as impractical benefit? Are not all benefits practical? and, if they are, what purpose does the epithet *practical* serve? 6. Consented to what? It is easy to see that the Doctor means *acceded to the request*, but he is a long way from saying so. The object writers usually have in view is to convey thought, not to set their readers to guessing. 7. *The outgrowth of* would be English. 8. "Occasional instructions"! Very vague, and well calculated to set the reader to guessing again. 9. Given to whom? 10. "*The* chair." The definite article made it necessary for the writer to specify what particular chair of Sacred Rhetoric he meant.

These ten lines are a fair specimen of the diction of the entire volume.

Page 131. "To render a *given ambiguous or* unintelligible sentence transparent, the following suggestions are recommended." The words in italics are unnecessary, since what is ambiguous is unintelligible. Then who has ever heard of *recommending suggestions?*

Dr. Townsend speaks of *mastering a subject before publishing it.* Publishing a subject?

* Should be, *a text-book for his course*, and not, *for his course a text-book.*

Page 133. "Violations of simplicity, whatever the type, show either that *the mind of* the writer is tainted with affectation, or *else* that *an effort is making* to conceal *conscious* poverty of *sentiment* under loftiness of expression." Here is an example of a kind of sentence that can be mended in only one way—by rewriting, which might be done thus: Violations of simplicity, whatever the type, show either that the writer is tainted with affectation, or that he is making an effort to conceal poverty of thought under loftiness of expression.

Page 143. "This *quality* is fully *stated* and recommended," etc. Who has ever heard of *stating a quality?*

On page 145 Dr. Townsend says: "A person can not read a single book of poor style without having his own style vitiated." *A book of poor style* is an awkward expression, to say the least. *A single badly-written book* would have been unobjectionable.

Page 160. "The presented picture produces instantly a definite effect." Why this unusual disposition of words? Why not say, in accordance with the idiom of the language, "The picture presented instantly produces," etc.?

Page 161. "The boy studies . . . geography and hates everything connected with the sea and land." Why *the* boy? As there are few things besides seals and turtles that are connected with the sea *and* land, the boy in question has few things to hate.

On page 175, Dr. Townsend heads a chapter thus: "*Art* of acquiring *Skill* in the use of Poetic Speech." This reminds one of the man who tried to lift himself over a fence by taking hold of the seat of his breeches. "*How* to acquire skill" is probably what is meant.

On page 232, "Jeremy Taylor is among the best

models of long sentences which are both clear and logical." Jeremy Taylor is a clear and logical long sentence?! True, our learned rhetorician says so, but he doesn't mean it. He means, "In Jeremy Taylor we find some of the best examples of long sentences which are at once clear and logical."

Since the foregoing was written, the second volume of Professor Townsend's "Art of Speech" has been published. In the brief preface to this volume we find this characteristic sentence: "The author has felt that *clergymen* more than *those* of other professions will study this treatise." The antecedent of the relative *those* being *clergymen*, the sentence, it will be perceived, says: "The author has felt that *clergymen* more than *clergymen of other professions* will study this treatise." Comment on such "art" as Professor Townsend's is not necessary.

I find several noteworthy examples of bad diction in an article in a recent number of an Australian magazine. The following are some of them: "*Large capital* always manages to make *itself* master of the situation; it is the small capitalist and the small landholder that would suffer," etc. Should be, "*The large capitalist . . . himself*," etc. Again: "The small farmer would . . . be despoiled . . . of the meager profit which *strenuous* labor had conquered from the *reluctant* soil." Not only are the epithets in italics superfluous, and consequently weakening in their effect, but idiom does not permit *strenuous* to be used to qualify *labor: hard* labor and *strenuous* effort. Again: "Capital has always the choice *of* a large field." Should be, "the choice *offered by* a large field." Again: "Should capital be withdrawn, tenements would soon prove insufficient." Should be, "*the number of* tenements would," etc. Again: "Men of wealth, therefore, would find their Fifth

Avenue mansions and their summer villas a little more burdened with taxes, but with this increase happily balanced by the exemption of their bonds and mortgages, their plate and furniture." The thought here is so simple that we easily divine it; but, if we look at the sentence at all carefully, we find that, though we supply the ellipses in the most charitable manner possible, the sentence really says: "Men would find their mansions more burdened, but would find them with this increased burden happily balanced by the exemption," etc. The sentence should have been framed somewhat in this wise: "Men . . . would find their . . . mansions . . . more burdened with taxes, but this increase in the taxes on their real estate would be happily balanced by the exemption from taxation of their bonds, mortgages, plate, and furniture." Again: "Men generally . . . would be inclined to laugh at the idea of intrusting the modern politician with such gigantic opportunities for enriching his favorites." We do not *intrust* one another with *opportunities*. *To enrich* would better the diction. Again: "The value of land that has accrued from labor is not . . . a just object for confiscation." Correctly: "The value of land that has *resulted* from labor is not *justly* . . . an object *of* confiscation." *Accrue* is properly used more in the sense of *spontaneous growth*. Again: "If the state attempts to confiscate this increase by means of taxes, either rentals will increase correspondingly, or such a check will be put upon *the* growth *of each place* and *all the* enterprises *connected with it* that greater injury would be done than if things had been left untouched." We have here, it will be observed, a confusion of moods; the sentence begins in the indicative and ends in the conditional. The words in italics are worse than superfluous. Rewritten: "If the state *should* attempt to confiscate this increase by means of taxes, either rentals

*would* increase correspondingly, or such a check *would* be put upon growth and enterprise that greater injury would," etc. Again: "The *theory* that land . . . is a *boon* of Nature, to which every person has an inalienable right equal to every other person, is not new." The words *theory* and *boon* are here misused. A *theory* is a system of suppositions. The things man receives from Nature are *gifts*, not *boons*: the gift of reason, the gift of speech, etc. The sentence should be: "The *declaration* (or *assertion*) that land . . . is a *gift* of Nature, to which every person has an inalienable right equal to *that of any* other person, is not new." Or, more simply and quite as forcibly: ". . . to which one person has an inalienable right equal to that of another, is not new." Or, more simply still, and more forcibly: ". . . to which one *man* has as good a right as another, is not new." By substituting the word *man* for *person*, we have a word of one syllable that expresses, in this connection, all that the longer word expresses. The fewer the syllables, if the thought be fully expressed, the more vigorous the diction. Inalienability being foreign to the discussion, the long word *inalienable* only encumbers the sentence.

"We have thus[1] passed in review[2] the changes and improvements[3] which the revision contains[4] in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. It has[5] not, indeed,[6] been possible to refer to[7] them all; but so many illustrations[8] have been given in[9] the several classes described that the reader will have[10] a satisfactory[11] survey of the whole subject. Whatever may be said of other portions[12] of the New Testament, we think it will be generally admitted that in this Epistle the changes have improved the old[13] translation. They are such as[14] make the English version[15] conform more completely[16] to the Greek original. If this be[17] true, the revisers have done a good work for the Church.[18] If it

be true[19] with regard to all the New Testament books, the work which they have done will remain[20] a blessing to the readers of those books for[21] generations to come. But the blessing will be only in the clearer presentation of the Divine truth, and, therefore, it will be only to the glory of God."

This astonishingly slipshod bit of composition is from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight. If the learned Professor of Divinity in Yale College deemed it worth while to give a little thought to manner as well as to matter, it is probable that his diction would be very different from what it is; and, if he were to give a few minutes to the making of verbal corrections in the foregoing paragraph, he would, perhaps, do something like this: 1, change *thus* to *now;* 2, write *some of* the changes; 3, strike out *and improvements;* 4, for *contains changes* substitute some other form of expression; 5, instead of *has been*, write *was;* 6, strike out *indeed;* 7, instead of *refer to*, write *cite;* 8, change *illustrations* to *examples;* 9, instead of *in*, write *of;* 10, instead of *the reader will have*, write *the reader will be able to get;* 11, change *satisfactory* to *tolerable;* 12, change *portions* to *parts;* 13, not talk of the *old* translation, as we have no new one; 14, strike out as superfluous the words *are such as;* 15, change *version* to *text;* 16, substitute *nearly* for *completely*, which does not admit of comparison; 17, substitute the indicative for the conditional; 18, end sentence with the word *work;* 19, introduce *also* after *be;* 20, instead of *remain*, in the sense of *be*, use *be;* 21, introduce *the* after *for*. As for the last sentence, it reminds one of Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words," though here we have, instead of a song and no words, words and no song, or rather no meaning. As is often true of cant, we have here simply a syntactical arrangement of words signifying —nothing.

If Professor Dwight were of those who, in common with the Addisons and Macaulays and Newmans, think it worth while to give some attention to diction, the thought conveyed in the paragraph under consideration would, perhaps, have been expressed somewhat in this wise:

"We have now passed in review some of the changes that, in the revision, have been made in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. It was not possible to cite them all, but a sufficient number of examples of the several classes described have been given to enable the reader to get a tolerable survey of the whole subject. Whatever may be said of the other parts of the New Testament, we think it will be generally admitted that in this Epistle the changes have improved the translation. They make the English text conform more nearly to the Greek. This being true, the revisers have done a good work; and, if it be also true with regard to all the New Testament books, the work which they have done will be a blessing to the readers of these books for the generations to come."

**Die with.** Man and brute die *of*, and not *with*, fevers, consumption, the plague, pneumonia, old age, and so on.

**Differ.** Writers differ *from* one another in opinion with regard to the particle we should use with this verb. Some say they differ *with*, others that they differ *from*, their neighbors in opinion. The weight of authority is on the side of always using *from*, though A may differ *with* C from D in opinion with regard, say, to the size of the fixed stars. "I differ, as to this matter, *from* Bishop Lowth." —Cobbett. *Different to* is heard sometimes instead of *different from*.

**Directly.** The Britons have a way of using this word in the sense of *when*, *as soon as*. This is quite foreign to its true meaning, which is immediately, at once, straight-

way. They say, for example, "*Directly* he reached the city, he went to his brother's." "Directly he [the saint] was dead, the Arabs sent his woolen shirt to the sovereign."—"London News." Dr. Hall says of its use in the sense of *as soon as :* "But, after all, it may simply anticipate on the English of the future."

**Dirt.** This word means filth or anything that renders foul and unclean, and means nothing else. It is often improperly used for earth or loam, and sometimes even for sand or gravel. We not unfrequently hear of a *dirt* road when an unpaved road is meant.

**Discommode.** This word is rarely used ; *incommode* is accounted the better form.

**Disremember.** This is a word vulgarly used in the sense of *forget.* It is said to be more frequently heard in the South than in the North.

**Distinguish.** This verb is sometimes improperly used for *discriminate.* We *distinguish* by means of the senses as well as of the understanding ; we *discriminate* by means of the understanding only. "It is difficult, in some cases, to *distinguish between,*" etc. : should be, "It is difficult, in some cases, to *discriminate between,*" etc. We *distinguish* one thing *from another,* and *discriminate between* two or more things.

**Dock—Wharf.** The first of these words is often improperly used for the second. Of docks there are several kinds : a *naval dock* is a place for the keeping of naval stores, timber, and materials for ship-building; a *dry dock* is a place where vessels are drawn out of the water for repairs ; a *wet dock* is a place where vessels are kept afloat at a certain level while they are loaded and unloaded ; a *sectional dock* is a contrivance for raising vessels out of the water on a series of air-tight boxes. A *dock,* then, is a place into

which things are received; hence, a man might fall *into* a dock, but could no more fall *off* a dock than he could fall off a hole. A *wharf* is a sort of quay built by the side of the water. A similar structure built at a right angle with the shore is generally called a *pier*. Vessels lie at *wharves* and *piers*, not at *docks*.

**Donate.** This word, which is defined as meaning to give, to contribute, is looked upon by most champions of good English as being an abomination. *Donation* is also little used by careful writers. "*Donate*," says Mr. Gould, "may be dismissed with this remark: so long as its place is occupied by *give*, *bestow*, *grant*, *present*, etc., it is not needed; and it should be unceremoniously bowed out, or thrust out, of the seat into which it has, temporarily, intruded."

**Done.** This past participle is often very inelegantly, if not improperly, used thus: "He did not cry out as some have *done* against it," which should read, "He did not cry out as some have against it"; i e., "as some *have cried out* against it."

"Done is frequently a very great offender against grammar," says Cobbett. "*To do* is the *act of doing*. We see people write, 'I *did* not speak yesterday so well as I wished to have *done*.' Now, what is meant by the writer? He means to say that he *did* not speak so well as he then *wished*, or was wishing, *to speak*. Therefore, the sentence should be, 'I did not speak yesterday so well as I wished *to do*.' That is to say, 'so well as I wished to do it'; that is to say, to do or to perform *the act of speaking*.

"Take great care not to be too free in your use of the verb *to do* in any of its times or modes. It is a nice little handy word, and, like our oppressed *it*, it is made use of very often when the writer is at a *loss* for what to put down. *To do* is to *act*, and therefore it never can, in any of its

parts, supply the place of a *neuter* verb. 'How do you do?' Here *do* refers to the *state*, and is essentially passive or neuter. Yet, to employ it for this purpose is very common. Dr. Blair, in his 23d Lecture, says: 'It is somewhat unfortunate that this Number of the "Spectator" did not *end*, as it might have *done*, with the former beautiful period.' That is to say, *done it.* And then we ask, Done what? Not the *act of ending*, because in this case there is *no action* at all. The verb means *to come to an end, to cease, not to go any further.* This same verb *to end* is sometimes an active verb: 'I *end* my sentence'; *then* the verb *to do* may supply its place; as, 'I have not ended my sentence so well as I might have *done*'; that is, done *it*; that is, done, or performed, the *act of ending.* But the Number of the 'Spectator' was no *actor;* it was expected to *perform* nothing; it was, by the Doctor, wished to have *ceased* to proceed. 'Did not *end* as it very well might have ended. . .' This would have been correct; but the Doctor wished to avoid the *repetition*, and thus he fell into bad grammar. 'Mr. Speaker, I do not *feel* so well satisfied as I should have *done* if the Right Honorable Gentleman had explained the matter more fully.' To *feel* satisfied is—when the satisfaction is to arise from conviction produced by fact or reasoning—a senseless expression; and to supply its place, when it is, as in this case, a neuter verb, by *to do*, is as senseless. Done *what?* Done *the act of feeling!* 'I do not *feel* so well satisfied as I should have *done*, or *executed*, or *performed* the *act of feeling'!* What incomprehensible words!"

**Don't.** Everybody knows that *don't* is a contraction of *do not*, and that *doesn't* is a contraction of *does not;* and yet *nearly* everybody is guilty of using *don't* when he should use *doesn't.* "So you *don't* go; John *doesn't* either, I hear."

**Double Genitive.** An anecdote of Mr. Lincoln—an anecdote of Mr. Lincoln's. We see at a glance that these two phrases are very different in meaning. So, also, a portrait of Brown—a portrait of Brown's. No precise rule has ever been given to guide us in our choice between these two forms of the possessive case. Sometimes it is not material which form is employed; where, however, it is material—and it generally is—we must consider the thought we wish to express, and rely on our discrimination.

**Dramatize.** See ADAPT.

**Drawing-room.** See PARLOR.

**Dress—Gown.** Within the memory of many persons the outer garment worn by women was properly called a *gown* by everybody, instead of being improperly called a *dress*, as it now is by nearly everybody.

**Drive.** See RIDE.

**Due—Owing.** These two words, though close synonyms, should not be used indiscriminately. The mistake usually made is in using *due* instead of *owing*. That is *due* which ought to be paid as a debt; that is *owing* which is to be referred to as a source. "It was *owing* to his exertions that the scheme succeeded." "It was *owing* to your negligence that the accident happened." "A certain respect is *due* to men's prejudices." "This was *owing* to an indifference to the pleasures of life." "It is *due* to the public that I should tell all I know of the matter."

**Each other.** "Their great authors address themselves, not to their country, but to *each other*."—Buckle. *Each other* is properly applied to two only; *one another* must be used when the number considered exceeds two. Buckle should have written *one another* and not *each other*, unless he meant to intimate that the Germans had only two great authors, which is not probable.

**Eat.** Grammarians differ very widely with regard to the conjugation of this verb ; there is no doubt, however, that from every point of view the preferable forms for the preterite and past participle are respectively *ate* and *eaten*. To refined ears the other forms smack of vulgarity, although supported by good authority. "I *ate* an apple." "I have *eaten* dinner." "John *ate* supper with me." "As soon as you have *eaten* breakfast we will set out."

**Editorial.** The use of this adjective as a substantive is said to be an Americanism.

**Education.** This is one of the most misused of words. A man may be well acquainted with the contents of text-books, and yet be a person of little *education ;* on the other hand, a man may be a person of good education, and yet know little of the contents of text-books. Abraham Lincoln and Edwin Forrest knew comparatively little of what is generally learned in schools ; still they were men of culture, men of *education*. A man may have ever so much book-knowledge and still be a boor ; but a man can not be a person of good education and not be—so far as manner is concerned—a gentleman. *Education*, then, is a whole of which Instruction and Breeding are the parts. The man or the woman—even in this democratic country of ours—who *deserves* the title of gentleman or lady is always a person of education ; i. e., he or she has a sufficient acquaintance with books and with the usages of social intercourse to acquit himself or herself creditably in the society of cultivated people. Not moral worth, nor learning, nor wealth, nor all three combined, can unaided make a gentleman, for with all three a man might be *uneducated*—i. e., coarse, unbred, unschooled in those things which alone make men welcome in the society of the refined.

**Effectuate.** This word, together with *ratiocinate* and

*eventuate*, is said to be a great favorite with the rural members of the Arkansas legislature.

**Effluvium.** The plural of this word is *effluvia*. It is a common error with those who have no knowledge of Latin to speak of "a disagreeable effluvia," which is as incorrect as it would be to talk about "a disagreeable vapors."

**Effort without Effect.** "Some writers deal in expletives to a degree that tires the ear and offends the understanding. With them everything is *excessively*, or *immensely*, or *extremely*, or *vastly*, or *surprisingly*, or *wonderfully*, or *abundantly*, or the like. The notion of such writers is that these words give *strength* to what they are saying. This is a great error. Strength must be found in the *thought*, or it will never be found in the *words*. Big-sounding words, without thoughts corresponding, are effort without effect."—William Cobbett. See FORCIBLE-FEEBLE.

**Egoist.** "One of a class of philosophers who professed to be sure of nothing but their own existence."—Reid.

**Egotist.** "One who talks much of himself."

"A tribe of *egotists* for whom I have always had a mortal aversion."—"Spectator."

**Either.** This word means, strictly, the *one* or the *other* of two. Unlike *both*, which means two taken collectively, *either*, like *each*, may mean *two considered separately;* but in this sense *each* is the better word to use. "Give me *either* of them" means, Give me the one or the other of two. "He has a farm on *either* side of the river" would mean that he has two farms, one on each (or either) side of the river. "He has a farm on *both* sides of the river" would mean that his farm lies partly on the one side of the river and partly on the other. The use of *either* in the sense of *each*, though biblical and defensible, may be accounted little if any better than an affectation. *Neither* is the negative

of *either*. *Either* is responded to by *or*, *neither* by *nor*; as, "*either* this *or* that," "*neither* this *nor* that." *Either* and *neither* should not—strictly—be used in relation to more than two objects. But, though both *either* and *neither* are strictly applicable to two only, they have been for a very long time used in relation to more than two by many good writers; and, as it is often convenient so to use them, it seems probable that the custom will prevail. When more than two things are referred to, *any* and *none* should be used instead of *either* and *neither*; as, "*any* of the three," not, "*either* of the three"; "*none* of the four," not, "*neither* of the four."

**Either Alternative.** The word *alternative* means a choice offered between two things. An *alternative writ*, for example, offers the *alternative* of choosing between the doing of a specified act or of showing cause why it is not done. Such propositions, therefore, as, "You are at liberty to choose *either* alternative," "*Two* alternatives are presented to me," "*Several* alternatives presented themselves," and the like, are not correct English. The word is correctly used thus: "I am confronted with a hard *alternative*: I must either denounce a friend or betray my trust." We rarely hear the word *alternate* or any of its derivatives correctly pronounced.

**Elder.** See OLDER.

**Elegant.** Professor Proctor says: "If you say to an American, 'This is a fine morning,' he is likely to reply, 'It is an *elegant* morning,' or perhaps oftener by using simply the word *elegant*. This is not a pleasing use of the word." This is not American English, Professor, but popinjay English.

**Ellipsis.** The omission of a word or of words necessary to complete the grammatical construction, but not

necessary to make the meaning clear, is called an *ellipsis*. We almost always, whether in speaking or in writing, leave out some of the words necessary to the *full* expression of our meaning. For example, in dating a letter to-day, we should write, "New York, August 25, 1881," which would be, if fully written out, "I am now writing in the city of New York; this is the twenty-fifth day of August, and this month is in the one thousand eight hundred and eighty-first year of the Christian era." "I am going to Wallack's" means, "I am going to Wallack's *theatre*." "I shall spend the summer at my aunt's"; i. e., at my aunt's *house*.

By supplying the *ellipses* we can often discover the errors in a sentence, if there are any.

**Enjoy bad Health.** As no one has ever been known to *enjoy* bad health, it is better to employ some other form of expression than this. Say, for example, he is in *feeble*, or *delicate*, health.

**Enthuse.** This is a word that is occasionally heard in conversation, and is sometimes met with in print; but it has not as yet made its appearance in the dictionaries. What its ultimate fate will be, of course, no one can tell; for the present, however, it is studiously shunned by those who are at all careful in the selection of their language. It is said to be most used in the South. The writer has never seen it anywhere in the North but in the columns of the "Boston Congregationalist."

**Epigram.** "The word *epigram* signified originally an inscription on a monument. It next came to mean a short poem containing some single thought pointedly expressed, the subjects being very various—amatory, convivial, moral, eulogistic, satirical, humorous, etc. Of the various devices for brevity and point employed in such compositions, especially in modern times, the most frequent is a play upon

words. . . . In the *epigram* the mind is roused by a conflict or contradiction between the form of the language and the meaning really conveyed."—Bain.

Some examples are:

"When you have nothing to say, say it."

"We can not see the wood for the trees"; that is, we can not get a general view because we are so engrossed with the details.

"Verbosity is cured by a large vocabulary"; that is, he who commands a large vocabulary is able to select words that will give his meaning tersely.

"By indignities men come to dignities."

"Some people are too foolish to commit follies."

"He went to his imagination for his facts, and to his memory for his tropes."

**Epithet.** Many persons use this word who are in error with regard to its meaning; they think that to "apply epithets" to a person is to vilify and insult him. Not at all. An *epithet* is a word that expresses a quality, good or bad; a term that expresses an attribute. "All *adjectives* are *epithets*, but all *epithets* are not *adjectives*," says Crabb; "thus, in Virgil's Pater Æneas, the *pater* is an *epithet*, but not an *adjective*." *Epithet* is the technical term of the rhetorician; *adjective*, that of the grammarian.

**Equally as well.** A redundant form of expression, as any one will see who for a moment considers it. *As well*, or *equally well*, expresses quite as much as *equally as well*.

**Equanimity of mind.** This phrase is tautological, and expresses no more than does *equanimity* (literally, "equalmindedness") alone; hence, *of mind* is superfluous, and consequently inelegant. *Anxiety of mind* is a scarcely less redundant form of expression. *A capricious mind* is in the same category.

**Erratum.** Plural, *errata.*

**Esquire.** An esquire was originally the shield-bearer of a knight. It is much, and, in the opinion of some, rather absurdly, used in this country. Mr. Richard Grant White says on the subject of its use: "I have yet to discover what a man means when he addresses a letter to John Dash, *Esqr.*" He means no more nor less than when he writes *Mr.* (master). The use of *Esq.* is quite as prevalent in England as in America, and has little more meaning there than here. It simply belongs to our stock of courteous epithets.

**Euphemism.** A description which describes in inoffensive language that which is of itself offensive, or a figure which uses agreeable phraseology when the literal would be offensive, is called a *euphemism.*

**Eventuate.** See EFFECTUATE.

**Everlastingly.** This adverb is misused in the South in a manner that is very apt to excite the risibility of one to whom the peculiar misuse is new. The writer recently visited the upper part of New York with a distinguished Southern poet and journalist. It was the gentleman's first ride over an elevated road. When we were fairly under way, in admiration of the rate of speed at which the cars were moving, he exclaimed, "Well, they do just *everlastingly* shoot along, don't they!"

**Every.** This word, which means simply each or all taken separately, is of late years frequently made, by slipshod speakers, to do duty for perfect, entire, great, or all possible. Thus we have such expressions as *every* pains, *every* confidence, *every* praise, *every* charity, and so on. We also have such diction as, "*Every one* has this in common"; meaning, "*All of us* have this in common."

**Every-day Latin.** *A fortiori:* with stronger reason

*A posteriori :* from the effect to the cause. *A priori :* from the cause to the effect. *Bona fide :* in good faith ; in reality. *Certiorari :* to be made more certain. *Ceteris paribus :* other circumstances being equal. *De facto :* in fact ; in reality. *De jure :* in right ; in law. *Ecce homo :* behold the man. *Ergo :* therefore. *Et cetera :* and the rest ; and so on. *Excerpta :* extracts. *Exempli gratia :* by way of example ; abbreviated, *e. g.*, and *ex. gr.* *Ex officio :* by virtue of his office. *Ex parte :* on one side ; an *ex parte* statement is a statement on one side only. *Ibidem :* in the same place ; abbreviated, *ibid.* *Idem :* the same. *Id est :* that is ; abbreviated, *i. e.* *Imprimis :* in the first place. *In statu quo :* in the former state ; just as it was. *In statu quo ante bellum :* in the same state as before the war. *In transitu :* in passing. *Index expurgatorius :* a purifying index. *In extremis :* at the point of death. *In memoriam :* in memory. *Ipse dixit :* on his sole assertion. *Item :* also. *Labor omnia vincit :* labor overcomes every difficulty. *Locus sigilli :* the place of the seal. *Multum in parvo :* much in little. *Mutatis mutandis :* after making the necessary changes. *Ne plus ultra :* nothing beyond ; the utmost point. *Nolens volens :* willing or unwilling. *Nota bene :* mark well ; take particular notice. *Omnes :* all. *O tempora, O mores !* O the times and the manners ! *Otium cum dignitate :* ease with dignity. *Otium sine dignitate :* ease without dignity. *Particeps criminis :* an accomplice. *Peccavi :* I have sinned. *Per se :* by itself. *Prima facie :* on the first view or appearance ; at first sight. *Pro bono publico :* for the public good. *Quid nunc :* what now? *Quid pro quo :* one thing for another ; an equivalent. *Quondam :* formerly. *Rara avis :* a rare bird ; a prodigy. *Resurgam :* I shall rise again. *Seriatim :* in order. *Sine die :* without specifying any particular day ; to an indefinite

time. *Sine qua non :* an indispensable condition. *Sui generis :* of its own kind. *Vade mecum :* go with me. *Verbatim :* word by word. *Versus :* against. *Vale :* farewell. *Via :* by the way of. *Vice :* in the place of. *Vide :* see. *Vi et armis :* by main force. *Viva voce :* orally ; by word of mouth. *Vox populi, vox Dei :* the voice of the people is the voice of God.

**Evidence—Testimony.** These words, though differing widely in meaning, are often used indiscriminately by careless speakers. *Evidence* is that which *tends* to convince ; *testimony* is that which is *intended* to convince. In a judicial investigation, for example, there might be a great deal of *testimony*—a great deal of *testifying*—and very little *evidence ;* and the *evidence* might be quite the reverse of the *testimony.* See PROOF.

**Exaggeration.** "Weak minds, feeble writers and speakers delight in *superlatives.*" See EFFORT WITHOUT EFFECT.

**Except.** "No one need apply *except* he is thoroughly familiar with the business," should be, "No one need apply *unless,*" etc.

**Excessively.** That class of persons who are never content with any form of expression that falls short of the superlative, frequently use *excessively* when *exceedingly* or even the little word *very* would serve their turn better. They say, for example, that the weather is *excessively hot,* when they should content themselves with saying simply that the weather is *very warm,* or, if the word suits them better, *hot.* Intemperance in the use of language is as much to be censured as intemperance in anything else ; like intemperance in other things, its effect is vulgarizing.

**Execute.** This word means to follow out to the end, to carry into effect, to accomplish, to fulfill, to perform ;

as, to execute an order, to execute a purpose. And the dictionaries and almost universal usage say that it also means to put to death in conformity with a judicial sentence; as, to execute a criminal. Some of our careful speakers, however, maintain that the use of the word in this sense is indefensible. They say that *laws* and *sentences* are executed, but not *criminals*, and that their execution only rarely results in the death of the persons upon whom they are executed. In the hanging of a criminal, it is, then, not the criminal who is executed, but the law and the sentence. The criminal is *hanged*.

**Expect.** This verb always has reference to what is to come, never to what is past. We can not *expect* backward. Instead, therefore, of saying, "I *expect*, you thought I would come to see you yesterday," we should say, "I *suppose*," etc.

**Experience.** "We *experience* great difficulty in getting him to take his medicine." The word *have* ought to be big enough, in a sentence like this, for anybody. "We *experienced* great hardships." Better, "We *suffered*."

**Extend.** This verb, the primary meaning of which is to stretch out, is used, especially by lovers of big words, in connections where to give, to show, or to offer would be preferable. For example, it is certainly better to say, "They *showed* me every courtesy," than "They *extended* every courtesy to me." See EVERY.

**False Grammar.** Some examples of false grammar will show what every one is the better for knowing: that in literature nothing should be taken on trust; that errors of grammar even are found where we should least expect them. "I do not know whether the imputation *were* just or not."—Emerson. "I proceeded to inquire if the 'extract' . . . *were* a veritable quotation."—Emerson. Should

be *was* in both cases. "How *sweet* the moonlight sleeps!" —Townsend, "Art of Speech," vol. i, p. 114. Should be *sweetly*. "There is no question *but* these arts . . . will greatly aid him," etc.—Ibid., p. 130. Should be *that*. "Nearly all who have been distinguished in literature or oratory have made . . . the generous confession that their attainments *have been* reached through patient and laborious industry. They have declared that speaking and writing, though once difficult for them, *have become* well-nigh recreations."—Ibid., p. 143. The *have been* should be *were*, and the *have become* should be *became*. "Many pronominal adverbs are correlatives of *each other*."—Harkness's "New Latin Grammar," p. 147. Should be *one another*. "Hot and cold springs, boiling springs, and quiet springs lie within a few feet of *each other*, but *none of them are properly geysers*."—Appletons' "Condensed Cyclopædia," vol. ii, p. 414. Should be *one another*, and *not one of them is properly a geyser*. "How much better for you as seller and the nation as buyer . . . than to sink . . . in cutting *one another's* throats." Should be *each other's*. "A minister, noted for prolixity of style, was once preaching before the inmates of a lunatic asylum. In one of his illustrations he painted a scene of a man condemned to be hung, but reprieved under the gallows." These two sentences are so faulty that the only way to mend them is to rewrite them. They are from a work that professes to teach the "art of speech." Mended: "A minister, noted for his prolixity, once *preached* before the inmates of a lunatic asylum. By way of illustration he painted a scene in which a man, *who had been* condemned to be *hanged*, *was* reprieved under the gallows."

**Female.** The terms *male* and *female* are not unfrequently used where good taste would suggest some other word. For example, we see over the doors of school-

houses, "Entrance for males," "Entrance for females." Now bucks and bulls are males as well as boys and men, and cows and sows are females as well as girls and women.

**Fetch.** See BRING.

**Fewer.** See LESS.

**Final Completion.** If there were such a thing as a plurality or a series of completions, there would, of course, be such a thing as the *final* completion; but, as every completion is final, to talk about a *final completion* is as absurd as it would be to talk about a *final finality*.

**First rate.** There are people who object to this phrase, and yet it is well enough when properly placed, as it is, for example, in such a sentence as this: "He's a 'first class' fellow, and I like him *first rate;* if I didn't, 'you bet' I'd just give him 'hail Columbia' for 'blowing' the thing all round town like the big fool that he is."

**Firstly.** George Washington Moon says in defense of *firstly:* "I do not object to the occasional use of *first* as an adverb; but, in sentences where it would be followed by *secondly*, *thirdly*, etc., I think that the adverbial form is preferable." To this, one of Mr. Moon's critics replies: "However desirable it may be to employ the word *firstly* on certain occasions, the fact remains that the employment of it on any occasion is not the best usage." Webster inserts *firstly*, but remarks, "Improperly used for *first*."

**Flee—Fly.** These verbs, though near of kin, are not interchangeable. For example, we can not say, "He *flew* the city," "He *flew* from his enemies," "He *flew* at the approach of danger," *flew* being the imperfect tense of *to fly*, which is properly used to express the action of birds on the wing, of kites, arrows, etc. The imperfect tense of *to flee* is *fled;* hence, "He *fled* the city," etc.

**Forcible-feeble.** This is a "novicy" kind of diction

in which the would-be forcible writer defeats his object by the overuse of expletives. Examples: "And yet the *great* centralization of wealth is one of the [great] evils of the day. All that Mr. ——— *utters* [says] upon this point is *forcible and* just. This centralization is due to the *enormous* reproductive power of capital, to the *immense* advantage that *costly and complicated* machinery gives to *great* [large] establishments, and to *the marked* difference of personal force among men." The first *great* is misplaced; the word *utters* is misused; the second *great* is ill-chosen. The other words in italics only enfeeble the sentence. Again: "In countries where *immense* [large] estates exist, a breaking up of these *vast* demesnes into *many* minor freeholds would no doubt be a [of] *very* great advantage." Substitute *large* for *immense*, and take out *vast*, *many*, and *very*, and the language becomes much more forcible. Again: "The *very* first effect of the ——— taxation plan would be destructive to the interests of this *great multitude* [class]; it would impoverish our *innumerable* farmers, *it would* confiscate the earnings of [our] *industrious* tradesmen and artisans, *it would* [and] paralyze the hopes of *struggling* millions." What a waste of portly expletives is here! With them the sentence is high-flown and weak; take them out, and introduce the words inclosed in brackets, and it becomes simple and forcible.

**Friend—Acquaintance.** Some philosopher has said that he who has half a dozen friends in the course of his life may esteem himself fortunate; and yet, to judge from many people's talk, one would suppose they had friends by the score. No man knows whether he has any friends or not until he has "their adoption tried"; hence, he who is desirous to call things by their right names will, as a rule, use the word *acquaintance* instead of *friend*. "Your friend"

is a favorite and very objectionable way many people, especially young people, have of writing themselves at the bottom of their letters. In this way the obscure stripling protests himself the FRIEND of the first man in the land, and that, too, when he is, perhaps, a comparative stranger and asking a favor.

**Galsome.** Here is a good, sonorous Anglo-Saxon word —meaning malignant, venomous, churlish—that has fallen into disuse.

**Gentleman.** Few things are in worse taste than to use the term *gentleman*, whether in the singular or plural, to designate the sex. "If I was a *gentleman*," says Miss Snooks. "*Gentlemen* have just as much curiosity as *ladies*," says Mrs. Jenkins. "*Gentlemen* have so much more liberty than we *ladies* have," says Mrs. Parvenue. Now, if these ladies were ladies, they would in each of these cases use the word *man* instead of *gentleman*, and *woman* instead of *lady*; further, Miss Snooks would say, "If I *were*." Well-bred men, men of culture and refinement—gentlemen, in short—use the terms *lady* and *gentleman* comparatively little, and they are especially careful not to call themselves *gentlemen* when they can avoid it. A gentleman, for example, does not say, "I, with some *other* gentlemen, went," etc.; he is careful to leave out the word *other*. The men who use these terms most, and especially those who lose no opportunity to proclaim themselves *gentlemen*, belong to that class of men who cock their hats on one side of their heads, and often wear them when and where gentlemen would remove them; who pride themselves on their familiarity with the latest slang; who proclaim their independence by showing the least possible consideration for others; who laugh long and loud at their own wit; who wear a profusion of cheap finery, such as outlandish watch-chains hooked in the low-

est button-hole of their vests, Brazilian diamonds in their shirt-bosoms, and big seal-rings on their little fingers; who use bad grammar and interlard their conversation with big oaths. In business correspondence Smith is addressed as *Sir*, while Smith & Brown are often addressed as *Gentlemen*—or, vulgarly, as *Gents*. Better, much, is it to address them as *Sirs*.

Since writing the foregoing, I have met with the following paragraph in the London publication, "All the Year Round": "Socially, the term 'gentleman' has become almost vulgar. It is certainly less employed by gentlemen than by inferior persons. The one speaks of 'a man I know,' the other of 'a gentleman I know.' In the one case the gentleman is taken for granted, in the other it seems to need specification. Again, as regards the term 'lady.' It is quite in accordance with the usages of society to speak of your acquaintance the duchess as 'a very nice person.' People who would say 'very nice lady' are not generally of a social class which has much to do with duchesses; and if you speak of one of these as a 'person,' you will soon be made to feel your mistake."

**Gents.** Of all vulgarisms, this is, perhaps, the most offensive. If we say *gents*, why not say *lades?*

**Gerund.** "'I have work *to do*,' 'there is no more *to say*,' are phrases where the verb is not in the common infinitive, but in the form of the *gerund*. 'He is the man *to do* it, or *for doing* it.' 'A house *to let*,' 'the course *to steer* by,' 'a place *to lie* in,' 'a thing *to be* done,' 'a city *to take* refuge in,' 'the means *to do* ill deeds,' are adjective gerunds; they may be expanded into clauses: 'a house that the owner lets or will let'; 'the course that we should steer by'; 'a thing that should be done'; 'a city wherein one may take refuge'; 'the means whereby ill deeds may be

done.' When the *to* ceased in the twelfth century to be a distinctive mark of the dative infinitive or gerund, *for* was introduced to make the writer's intention clear. Hence the familiar form in 'what went ye out *for to see?*' 'they came *for to show* him the temple.'"—Bain.

**Get.** In sentences expressing simple possession—as, "I have *got* a book," "What has he *got* there?" "Have you *got* any news?" "They have *got* a new house," etc.—*got* is entirely superfluous, if not, as some writers contend, absolutely incorrect. Possession is completely expressed by *have*. "Foxes have holes; the birds of the air have nests"; not, "Foxes have *got* holes; the birds of the air have *got* nests." Formerly the imperfect tense of this verb was *gat*, which is now obsolete, and the perfect participle was *gotten*, which, some grammarians say, is growing obsolete. If this be true, there is no good reason for it. If we say *eaten*, *written*, *striven*, *forgotten*, why not say *gotten*, where this form of the participle is more euphonious—as it often is—than *got?*

**Goods.** This term, like other terms used in trade, should be restricted to the vocabulary of commerce. Messrs. Arnold & Constable, in common with the Washington Market huckster, very properly speak of their wares as their *goods;* but Mrs. Arnold and Mrs. Constable should, and I doubt not do, speak of their gowns as being made of fine or coarse *silk*, *cashmere*, *muslin*, or whatever the material may be.

**Gould against Alford.** Mr. Edward S. Gould, in his review of Dean Alford's "Queen's English," remarks, on page 131 of his "Good English": "And now, as to the style* of the Dean's book, taken as a whole. He must be held responsible for every error in it; because, as has been

* Mr. Gould criticises the Dean's *diction*, not his *style*.

shown, he has had full leisure for its revision.* The errors are, nevertheless, numerous; and the shortest way to exhibit them is † in tabular form." In several instances Mr. Gould would not have taken the Dean to task had he known English better. The following are a few of Mr. Gould's corrections in which he is clearly in the right:

Paragraph

4. "Into *another* land *than*"; should be, "into a land *other than*."

16. "We do not follow rule in spelling other words, but custom"; should be, "we do not follow *rule, but custom*, in spelling," etc.

18. "The distinction is observed in French, but *never appears* to have been made," etc.; read, "*appears never* to have been made."

61. "*Rather* to aspirate more *than* less"; should be, "to aspirate more *rather than* less."

9. "It is said also *only* to occur three times," etc.; read, "*occur only* three times."

44. "This doubling *only takes place* in a syllable," etc.; read, "*takes place only*."

142. "Which can *only* be decided when those circumstances are known"; read, "*can be decided only* when," etc.

166. "I will *only* say that it produces," etc.; read, "I will *say only*," etc.

170. "It is said that this can *only* be filled in thus"; read, "can be *filled in only* thus."

368. "I can *only* deal with the complaint in a general way"; read, "*deal with the complaint only*," etc.

86. "*In* so far as they are idiomatic," etc. What is the use of *in?*

171. "Try the experiment"; "*tried* the experiment." Read, *make* and *made*.

345. "It is *most* generally used of that very sect," etc. Why *most?*

* Better, "to revise it."

† "Is *to put them* in tabular form."

362. "The joining together two clauses with a third," etc.; read, "*of* two clauses," etc.

**Gown.** See DRESS.

**Graduated.** Students do not *graduate;* they *are* graduated. Hence most writers nowadays say, "I *was*, he *was*, or they *were* graduated"; and ask, "When *were* you, or *was* he, graduated?"

**Grammatical Errors.** "The correctness of the expression *grammatical errors* has been disputed. 'How,' it has been asked, 'can an error be grammatical?' How, it may be replied, can we with propriety say, *grammatically incorrect?* Yet we can do so.

"No one will question the propriety of saying *grammatically correct.* Yet the expression is the acknowledgment of things *grammatically* INcorrect. Likewise the phrase *grammatical correctness* implies the existence of *grammatical* INcorrectness. If, then, a sentence is *grammatically incorrect*, or, what is the same thing, has *grammatical incorrectness*, it includes a GRAMMATICAL ERROR. *Grammatically incorrect* signifies INCORRECT WITH RELATION TO THE RULES OF GRAMMAR. *Grammatical errors* signifies ERRORS WITH RELATION TO THE RULES OF GRAMMAR.

"They who ridicule the phrase *grammatical errors*, and substitute the phrase *errors in grammar*, make an egregious mistake. Can there, it may be asked with some show of reason, be an error in grammar? Why, grammar is a science founded in our nature, referable to our ideas of time, relation, method; imperfect, doubtless, as to the system by which it is represented; but surely we can speak of error in that which is error's criterion! All this is hypercritical, but hypercriticism must be met with its own weapons.

"Of the two expressions—*a grammatical error*, and *an*

*error in grammar*—the former is preferable. If one's judgment can accept neither, one must relinquish the belief in the possibility of tersely expressing the idea of an offense against grammatical rules. Indeed, it would be difficult to express the idea even by circumlocution. Should some one say, 'This sentence is, according to the rules of grammar, incorrect.' 'What!' the hypercritic may exclaim, 'incorrect! and according to the rules of grammar!' 'This sentence, then,' the corrected person would reply, 'contains an error in grammar.' 'Nonsense!' the hypercritic may shout, 'grammar is a science; you may be wrong in its interpretation, but principles are immutable!'

"After this, it need scarcely be added that, grammatically, no one can make a mistake, that there can be no grammatical mistake, that there can be no bad grammar, and, consequently, no bad English; a very pleasant conclusion, which would save us a great amount of trouble if it did not lack the insignificant quality of being true."—"Vulgarisms and Other Errors of Speech."

**Gratuitous.** There are those who object to the use of this word in the sense of unfounded, unwarranted, unreasonable, untrue. Its use in this sense, however, has the sanction of abundant authority. "Weak and *gratuitous* conjectures."—Porson. "A *gratuitous* assumption."—Godwin. "The *gratuitous* theory."—Southey. "A *gratuitous* invention."—De Quincey. "But it is needless to dwell on the improbability of a hypothesis which has been shown to be altogether *gratuitous*."—Dr. Newman.

**Grow.** This verb originally meant to increase in size, but has normally come to be also used to express a change from one state or condition to another; as, to *grow* dark, to *grow* weak or strong, to *grow* faint, etc. But it is doubtful whether what is large can properly be said to *grow*

small. In this sense, *become* would seem to be the better word.

**Gums.** See RUBBERS.

**Had have.** Nothing could be more incorrect than the bringing together of these two auxiliary verbs in this manner; and yet we occasionally find it in writers of repute. Instead of "Had I known it," "Had you seen it," "Had we been there," we hear, "Had I *have* known it," "Had you *have* seen it," "Had we *have* been there."

**Had ought.** This is a vulgarism of the worst description, yet we hear people, who would be highly indignant if any one should intimate that they were not ladies and gentlemen, say, "He *had* ought to go." A fitting reply would be, "Yes, I think he better had." *Ought* says all that *had ought* says.

**Had rather.** This expression and *had better* are much used, but, in the opinion of many, are indefensible. We hear them in such sentences as, "I *had* rather not do it," "You *had* better go home." "Now, what tense," it is asked, "is *had do* and *had go?*" If we transpose the words thus, "You *had do* better (to) go home," it becomes at once apparent, it is asserted, that the proper word to use in connection with *rather* and *better* is not *had*, but *would;* thus, "I *would* rather not do it," "You *would* better go home." Examples of this use of *had* can be found in the writings of our best authors. For what Professor Bain has to say on this subject in his "Composition Grammar," see SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD.

**Half.** "It might have been expressed in *one* half the space.' We see at a glance that *one* here is superfluous.

**Hanged—Hung.** The irregular form, *hung*, of the past participle of the verb *to hang* is most used; but, when the word denotes suspension by the neck for the purpose of

destroying life, the regular form, *hanged*, is always used by careful writers and speakers.

**Haste.** See HURRY.

**Heading.** See CAPTION.

**Healthy—Wholesome.** The first of these two words is often improperly used for the second ; as, "Onions are a *healthy* vegetable." A man, if he is in good health, is *healthy ;* the food he eats, if it is not deleterious, is *wholesome.* A *healthy* ox makes *wholesome* food. We speak of *healthy* surroundings, a *healthy* climate, situation, employment, and of *wholesome* food, advice, examples. *Healthful* is generally used in the sense of conducive to health, virtue, morality ; as, *healthful* exercise, the *healthful* spirit of the community—meaning that the spirit that prevails in the community is conducive to virtue and good morals.

**Helpmate.** The dictionaries suggest that this word is a corruption of *help* and *meet*, as we find these words used in Gen. ii, 18, "I will make him a help meet for him," and that the proper word is *helpmeet.* If, as is possible, the words in Genesis mean, "I will make him a help, meet [suitable] for him," then neither *helpmate* nor *helpmeet* has any *raison d'être.*

**Highfalutin.** This is a style of writing often called the freshman style. It is much indulged in by very young men, and by a class of older men who instinctively try to make up in clatter for what they lack in matter. Examples of this kind of writing are abundant in Professor L. T. Townsend's "Art of Speech," which, as examples, are all the better for not being of that exaggerated description sometimes met with in the newspapers. Vol. i, p. 131: "Very often adverbs, prepositions, and relatives drift so far from their moorings as to lose themselves, or make attachments where they do not belong." Again, p. 135 : "Every law of speech en-

forces the statement that there is no excuse for such inflated and defective style. [Such style!] To speak thus is treason in the realms and under the laws of language." Again, p. 175: "Cultivate figure-making habitudes. This is done by asking the spiritual import of every physical object seen; also by forming the habit of constantly metaphorizing. Knock at the door of anything met which interests, and ask, 'Who lives here?' The process is to look, then close the eyes, then look within." The blundering inanity of this kind of writing is equaled only by its bumptious grandiloquence. On p. 137 Dr. Townsend quotes this wholesome admonition from Coleridge: "If men would only say what they have to say in plain terms, how much more eloquent they would be!" As an example of reportorial highfalutin, I submit the following: "The spirit of departed day had joined communion with the myriad ghosts of centuries, and four full hours fled into eternity before the citizens of many parts of the town found out there was a freshet here at all."

**Hints.** "Never write about any matter that you do not well understand. If you clearly understand all about your matter, you will never want thoughts, and thoughts instantly become words.

"One of the greatest of all faults in writing and in speaking is this: the using of many words to *say little*. In order to guard yourself against this fault, inquire what is the *substance*, or *amount*, of what you have said. Take a long speech of some talking Lord and put down upon paper what the amount of it is. You will most likely find that the *amount* is very small; but at any rate, when you get it, you will then be able to examine it and to tell what it is worth. A very few examinations of the sort will so frighten you that you will be for ever after upon

your guard against *talking a great deal* and *saying little.*"—Cobbett.

"Be simple, be unaffected, be honest in your speaking and writing. Never use a long word where a short one will do. Call a spade *a spade*, not a *well-known oblong instrument of manual husbandry;* let home be *home*, not a *residence;* a place a *place*, not a *locality;* and so of the rest. Where a short word will do, you always lose by using a long one. You lose in clearness; you lose in honest expression of your meaning; and, in the estimation of all men who are qualified to judge, you lose in reputation for ability. The only true way to shine, even in this false world, is to be modest and unassuming. Falsehood may be a very thick crust, but, in the course of time, truth will find a place to break through. Elegance of language may not be in the power of all of us; but simplicity and straightforwardness are. Write much as you would speak; speak as you think. If with your inferiors, speak no coarser than usual; if with your superiors, no finer. Be what you say; and, within the rules of prudence, say what you are."—Dean Alford.

"Go critically over what you have written, and strike out every word, phrase, and clause which it is found will leave the sentence neither less clear nor less forcible than it is without them."—Swinton.

"With all watchfulness, it is astonishing what slips are made, even by good writers, in the employment of an inappropriate word. In Gibbon's 'Rise and Fall,' the following instance occurs: 'Of nineteen tyrants who started up after the reign of Gallienus, there was not one who *enjoyed* a life of peace or a natural *death.*' Alison, in his 'History of Europe,' writes: 'Two great sins—one of *omission* and one of commission—have been *committed* by the states of Europe in modern times.' And not long since a worthy

Scotch minister, at the close of the services, intimated his intention of visiting some of his people as follows: 'I intend, during this week, to visit in Mr. M——'s district, and will on this occasion take the opportunity of *embracing* all the servants in the district.' When worthies such as these offend, who shall call the bellman in question as he cries, 'Lost, a silver-handled silk lady's parasol'?

"The proper arrangement of words into sentences and paragraphs gives clearness and strength. To attain a clear and pithy style, it may be necessary to cut down, to rearrange, and to rewrite whole passages of an essay. Gibbon wrote his 'Memoirs' six times, and the first chapter of his 'History' three times. Beginners are always slow to prune or cast away any thought or expression which may have cost labor. They forget that brevity is no sign of thoughtlessness. Much consideration is needed to compress the details of any subject into small compass. Essences are more difficult to prepare, and therefore more valuable, than weak solutions. Pliny wrote to one of his friends, 'I have not time to write you a short letter, therefore I have written you a long one.' Apparent elaborateness is always distasteful and weak. Vividness and strength are the product of an easy command of those small trenchant Saxon monosyllables which abound in the English language."—"Leisure Hour."

"As a rule, the student will do well to banish for the present all thought of ornament or elegance, and to aim only at expressing himself plainly and clearly. The best ornament is always that which comes unsought. Let him not beat about the bush, but go straight to the point. Let him remember that what is written is meant to be read; that time is short; and that—other things being equal—the fewer words the better. . . . Repetition is a far

less serious fault than obscurity. Young writers are often unduly afraid of repeating the same word, and require to be reminded that it is always better to use the right word over again than to replace it by a wrong one—and a word which is liable to be misunderstood is a wrong one. A frank repetition of a word has even sometimes a kind of charm—as bearing the stamp of *truth*, the foundation of all excellence of style."—Hall.

"A young writer is afraid to be simple; he has no faith in beauty unadorned, hence he crowds his sentences with superlatives. In his estimation, turgidity passes for eloquence, and simplicity is but another name for that which is weak and unmeaning."—George Washington Moon.

**Honorable.** See REVEREND.

**How.** "I have heard *how* in Italy one is beset on all sides by beggars": read, "heard *that*." "I have heard *how* some critics have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with soft notes of flattery."—Dr. Johnson. The *how* in this sentence also should be *that*. *How* means the *manner in which*. We may, therefore, say, "I have heard *how* he went about it to circumvent you."

"And it is good judgment alone can dictate *how far* to proceed in it and *when* to stop." Cobbett comments on this sentence in this wise: "Dr. Watts is speaking here of writing. In such a case, an adverb, like *how far*, expressive of longitudinal space, introduces a *rhetorical figure*; for the plain meaning is, that judgment will dictate *how much to write on it* and not *how far to proceed in it*. The figure, however, is very proper and much better than the literal words. But when a figure is *begun* it should be carried on throughout, which is not the case here; for the

Doctor begins with a figure of longitudinal space and ends with a figure of *time*. It should have been, *where* to stop. Or, how *long* to proceed in it and *when* to stop. To tell a man *how far* he is to go into the Western countries of America, and *when* he is to stop, is a very different thing from telling him *how far* he is to go and *where* he is to stop. I have dwelt thus on this distinction for the purpose of putting you on the watch and guarding you against confounding figures. The less you use them the better, till you understand more about them."

**Humanitarianism.** This word, in its original, theological sense, means the doctrine that denies the godhead of Jesus Christ, and avers that he was possessed of a human nature only; a *humanitarian*, therefore, in the theological sense, is one who believes this doctrine. The word and its derivatives are, however, nowadays, both in this country and in England, most used in a humane, philanthropic sense; thus, "The audience enthusiastically endorsed the *humanitarianism* of his eloquent discourse."—Hatton.

**Hung.** See HANGED.

**Hurry.** Though widely different in meaning, both the verb and the noun *hurry* are continually used for *haste* and *hasten*. *Hurry* implies not only *haste*, but haste with confusion, flurry; while *haste* implies only rapidity of action, an eager desire to make progress, and, unlike *hurry*, is not incompatible with deliberation and dignity. It is often wise to *hasten* in the affairs of life; but, as it is never wise to proceed without forethought and method, it is never wise to *hurry*. Sensible people, then, may be often in *haste*, but are never in a *hurry*; and we tell others to *make haste*, and not to *hurry up*.

**Hyperbole.** The magnifying of things beyond their

natural limits is called *hyperbole.* Language that signifies, literally, more than the exact truth, more than is really intended to be represented, by which a thing is represented greater or less, better or worse than it really is, is said to be *hyperbolical.* Hyperbole is exaggeration.

"Our common forms of compliment are almost all of them extravagant *hyperboles.*"—Blair.

Some examples are the following:

"Rivers of blood and hills of slain."

"They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions."

"The sky shrunk upward with unusual dread,
And trembling Tiber div'd beneath his bed."

"So frowned the mighty combatants, that hell
Grew darker at their frown."

"I saw their chief tall as a rock of ice; his spear the blasted fir; his shield the rising moon; he sat on the shore like a cloud of mist on a hill."

**Ice-cream—Ice-water.** As for ice-cream, there is no such thing, as ice-cream would be the product of frozen cream, i. e., cream made from ice by melting. What is called ice-cream is cream *iced;* hence, properly, *iced* cream and not *ice*-cream. The product of melted ice is *ice*-water, whether it be cold or warm; but water made cold with ice is *iced* water, and not *ice*-water.

**If.** "I doubt *if* this will ever reach you": say, "I doubt *whether* this will ever reach you."

**Ill.** See SICK.

**Illy.** It will astonish not a few to learn that there is no such word as *illy.* The form of the adverb, as well as of the adjective and the noun, is *ill.* A thing is *ill* formed, or *ill* done, or *ill* made, or *ill* constructed, or *ill* put together.

"*Ill* fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."—Goldsmith.

**Immodest.** This adjective and its synonyms, *indecent* and *indelicate*, are often used without proper discrimination being made in their respective meanings. *Indecency* and *immodesty* are opposed to morality: the former in externals, as dress, words, and looks; the latter in conduct and disposition. "*Indecency*," says Crabb, "may be a partial, *immodesty* is a positive and entire breach of the moral law. *Indecency* is less than *immodesty*, but more than *indelicacy*." It is *indecent* for a man to marry again very soon after the death of his wife. It is *indelicate* for any one to obtrude himself upon another's retirement. It is *indecent* for women to expose their persons as do some whom we can not call *immodest*.

"Immodest words admit of no defense,
For want of decency is want of sense."
—Earl of Roscommon.

**Impropriety.** As a rhetorical term, defined as an error in using words in a sense different from their recognized signification.

**Impute.** Non-painstaking writers not unfrequently use *impute* instead of *ascribe*. "The numbers [of blunders] that have been *imputed* to him are endless."—"Appletons' Journal." The use of *impute* in this connection is by no means indefensible; still it would have been better to use *ascribe*.

**In our midst.** The phrases *in our midst* and *in their midst* are generally supposed to be of recent introduction; and, though they have been used by some respectable writers, they nevertheless find no favor with those who study propriety in the use of language. To the phrase *in the midst* no one objects. "Jesus came and stood

in the midst." "There was a hut *in the midst* of the forest."

**In respect of.** "The deliberate introduction of incorrect forms, whether by the coinage of new or the revival of obsolete and inexpressive syntactical combinations, ought to be resisted even in trifles, especially where it leads to the confusion of distinct ideas. An example of this is the recent use of the adverbial phrases *in respect of*, *in regard of*, for *in* or *with* respect *to*, or regard *to*. This innovation is without any syntactical ground, and ought to be condemned and avoided as a mere grammatical crotchet."—George P. Marsh, "Lectures on the English Language," p. 660.

**In so far as.** A phrase often met with, and in which the *in* is superfluous. "A want of proper opportunity would suffice, *in* so far as the want could be shown." "We are to act up to the extent of our knowledge; but, *in* so far as our knowledge falls short," etc.

**Inaugurate.** This word, which means to install in office with certain ceremonies, is made, by many lovers of big words, to do service for *begin;* but the sooner these rhetorical high-fliers stop *inaugurating* and content themselves with simply *beginning* the things they are called upon to do in the ordinary routine of daily life, the sooner they will cease to set a very bad example.

**Indecent.** See IMMODEST.

**Index expurgatorius.** William Cullen Bryant, who was a careful student of English, while he was editor of the "New York Evening Post," sought to prevent the writers for that paper from using "over and above (for 'more than'); artiste (for 'artist'); aspirant; authoress; beat (for 'defeat'); bagging (for 'capturing'); balance (for 'remainder'); banquet (for 'dinner' or 'supper'); bogus; casket

(for 'coffin'); claimed (for 'asserted'); collided; commence (for 'begin'); compete; cortége (for 'procession'); cotemporary (for 'contemporary'); couple (for 'two'); darky (for 'negro'); day before yesterday (for 'the day before yesterday'); début; decrease (as a verb); democracy (applied to a political party); develop (for 'expose'); devouring element (for 'fire'); donate; employé; enacted (for 'acted'); indorse (for 'approve'); en route; esq.; graduate (for 'is graduated'); gents (for 'gentlemen'); 'Hon.'; House (for 'House of Representatives'); humbug; inaugurate (for 'begin'); in our midst; item (for 'particle, extract, or paragraph'); is being done, and all passives of this form; jeopardize; jubilant (for 'rejoicing'); juvenile (for 'boy'); lady (for 'wife'); last (for 'latest'); lengthy (for 'long'); leniency (for 'lenity'); loafer; loan or loaned (for 'lend' or 'lent'); located; majority (relating to places or circumstances, for 'most'); Mrs. President, Mrs. Governor, Mrs. General, and all similar titles; mutual (for 'common'); official (for 'officer'); ovation; on yesterday; over his signature; pants (for 'pantaloons'); parties (for 'persons'); partially (for 'partly'); past two weeks (for 'last two weeks,' and all similar expressions relating to a definite time); poetess; portion (for 'part'); posted (for 'informed'); progress (for 'advance'); reliable (for 'trustworthy'); rendition (for 'performance'); repudiate (for 'reject' or 'disown'); retire (as an active verb); Rev. (for 'the Rev.'); rôle (for 'part'); roughs; rowdies; secesh; sensation (for 'noteworthy event'); standpoint (for 'point of view'); start, in the sense of setting out; state (for 'say'); taboo; talent (for 'talents' or 'ability'); talented; tapis; the deceased; war (for 'dispute' or 'disagreement')."

This index is offered here as a curiosity rather than as a guide, though in the main it might safely be used as

such. No valid reason, however, can be urged for discouraging the use of several words in the list; the words aspirant, banquet, casket, compete, decrease, progress, start, talented, and deceased, for example.

**Indicative and Subjunctive.** "'I *see* the signal,' is unconditional; '*if* I *see* the signal,' is the same fact expressed in the form of a condition. The one form is said to be in the *indicative* mood, the mood that simply *states or indicates* the action; the other form is in the *subjunctive*, conditional, or conjunctive mood. There is sometimes a slight variation made in English, to show that an affirmation is made as a condition. The mood is called 'subjunctive,' because the affirmation *is subjoined to* another affirmation: '*If I see the signal*, I will call out.'

"Such forms as 'I may see,' 'I can see,' have sometimes been considered as a variety of mood, to which the name 'Potential' is given. But this can not properly be maintained. There is no trace of any inflection corresponding to this meaning, as we find with the subjunctive. Moreover, such a mood would have itself to be subdivided into indicative and subjunctive forms: 'I may go,' 'if I may go.' And further, we might proceed to constitute other moods on the same analogy, as, for example, an obligatory mood—'I must go,' or 'I ought to go'; a mood of resolution—'I will go, you shall go'; a mood of gratification—'I am delighted to go'; of deprecation—'I am grieved to go.' The only difference in the two last instances is the use of the sign of the infinitive 'to,' which does not occur after 'may,' 'can,' 'must,' 'ought,' etc.; but that is not an essential difference. Some grammarians consider the form 'I do go' a separate mood, and term it the emphatic mood. But all the above objections apply to it likewise, as well as many others."—Bain. See SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD.

**Individual.** This word is often most improperly used for *person;* as, "The *individual* I saw was not over forty"; "There were several *individuals* on board that I had never seen before." *Individual* means, etymologically, that which can not be divided, and is used, in speaking of things as well as of persons, to express unity. It is opposed to the whole, or that which is divisible into parts.

**Indorse.** Careful writers generally discountenance the use of *indorse* in the sense of *sanction, approve, applaud.* In this signification it is on the list of prohibited words in some of our newspaper offices. "The following rules are *indorsed* by nearly all writers upon this subject."—Dr. Townsend. It is plain that the right word to use here is *approved.* "The public will heartily *indorse* the sentiments uttered by the court."—New York "Evening Telegram." "The public will heartily *approve* the sentiments *expressed* by the court," is what the sentence should be.

**Infinitive Mood.** When we can choose, it is generally better to use the verb in the infinitive than in the participial form. "Ability being in general the power *of doing*," etc. Say, *to do.* "I desire to reply . . . to the proposal *of substituting* a tax upon land values . . . and *making* this tax, as near [nearly] as may be, equal to rent," etc. Say, *to substitute* and *to make.* "This quality is of prime importance when the chief object is *the imparting of* knowledge." Say, *to impart.*

**Initiate.** This is a pretentious word, which, with its derivatives, many persons—especially those who like to be grandiloquent—use, when homely English would serve their turn much better.

**Innumerable Number.** A repetitional expression to be avoided. We may say *innumerable* times, or *numberless* times, but we should not say an *innumerable number* of times.

**Interrogation.** The rhetorical figure that asks a question in order to emphasize the reverse of what is asked is called *interrogation;* as, "Do we mean to submit to this measure? Do we mean to submit, and consent that we ourselves, our country and its rights, shall be trampled on?"

"Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?"

**Introduce.** See PRESENT.

**Irony.** That mode of speech in which what is meant is contrary to the literal meaning of the words—in which praise is bestowed when censure is intended—is called *irony.* Irony is a kind of delicate sarcasm or satire—raillery, mockery.

"In writings of humor, figures are sometimes used of so delicate a nature that it shall often happen that some people will see things in a direct contrary sense to what the author and the majority of the readers understand them: to such the most innocent *irony* may appear irreligion."—Cambridge.

**Irritate.** See AGGRAVATE.

**Is being built.** A tolerable idea of the state of the discussion regarding the propriety of using the locution *is being built,* and all like expressions, will, it is hoped, be obtained from the following extracts. The Rev. Peter Bullions, in his "Grammar of the English Language," says:

"There is properly *no passive* form, in English, *corresponding to the progressive* form in the *active* voice, except where it is made by the participle *ing,* in a passive sense; thus, 'The house is building'; 'The garments are making'; 'Wheat is selling,' etc. An attempt has been made by some grammarians, of late, to banish such expressions from the language, though they have been used in all time past by the best writers, and to justify and defend a clumsy sole-

cism, which has been recently introduced chiefly through the newspaper press, but which has gained such currency, and is becoming so familiar to the ear, that it seems likely to prevail, with all its uncouthness and deformity. I refer to such expressions as 'The house is being built'; 'The letter is being written'; 'The mine is being worked'; 'The news is being telegraphed,' etc., etc.

"This mode of expression *had no existence* in the language till *within the last fifty years*.* This, indeed, would not make the expression wrong, were it otherwise unexceptionable; but its recent origin shows that it is not, as is pretended, a *necessary* form.

"This form of expression, when analyzed, is found not to express what it is intended to express, and would be used only by such as are either ignorant of its import or are careless and loose in their use of language. To make this manifest, let it be considered, first, that there is *no progressive form* of the verb *to be*, and no need of it; hence, there is no such expression in English as *is being*. Of course the expression '*is being* built,' for example, is not a compound of *is being* and *built*, but of *is* and *being built*; that is, of the verb *to be* and the *present participle passive*. Now, let it be observed that the only verbs in which the present participle passive expresses a continued action are those mentioned above as the first class, in which the regular passive form expresses a *continuance* of the action; as, *is loved*, *is desired*, etc., and in which, of course, the form in question (*is being built*) is not required. Nobody would think of saying, 'He is being loved'; 'This result is being desired.'

"The use of this form is justified only by *condemning an established usage* of the language; namely, the passive

* Bullions' "Grammar" was published in 1867.

sense in some verbs of the participle in *ing*. In reference to this it is flippantly asked, 'What does the house build?' 'What does the letter write?' etc. — taking for granted, without attempting to prove, that the participle in *ing* can not have a passive sense in any verb. The following are a few examples from writers of the best reputation, which this novelty would condemn: 'While the ceremony was performing.'—Tom. Brown. 'The court was then holding.'—Sir G. McKenzie. 'And still be doing, never done.'—Butler. 'The books are selling.'—Allen's 'Grammar.' 'To know nothing of what is transacting in the regions above us.'—Dr. Blair. 'The spot where this new and strange tragedy was acting.'—E. Everett. 'The fortress was building.'—Irving. 'An attempt is making in the English parliament.'—D. Webster. 'The church now erecting in the city of New York.'—'N. A. Review.' 'These things were transacting in England.'—Bancroft.

"This new doctrine is in *opposition* to the almost *unanimous judgment* of the *most distinguished grammarians* and critics, who have considered the subject, and expressed their views concerning it. The following are a specimen: 'Expressions of this kind are condemned by some critics; but the usage is unquestionably of far better authority, and (according to my apprehension) in far better taste, than the more complex phraseology which some late writers adopt in its stead; as, "The books are now being sold."'—Goold Brown. 'As to the notion of introducing a new and more complex passive form of conjugation, as, "The bridge *is being built*," "The bridge *was being built*," and so forth, it is one of the most absurd and monstrous innovations ever thought of. "The work *is now being published*," is certainly no better English than, "The work *was being published, has been being published, had been being published,*

*shall or will be being published, shall or will have been being published,*" and so on through all the moods and tenses. What a language shall we have when our verbs are thus conjugated!'—Brown's 'Gr. of Eng. Gr.,' p. 361. De War observes: 'The participle in *ing* is also passive in many instances; as, "The house is building," "I heard of a plan forming,"' etc.—Quoted in 'Frazee's Grammar,' p. 49. 'It would be an absurdity, indeed, to give up the only way we have of denoting the incomplete state of action by a passive form (viz., by the participle in *ing* in the passive sense).'—Arnold's 'English Grammar,' p. 46. 'The present participle is often used passively; as, "The ship is building." The form of expression, *is being built, is being committed,* etc., is almost universally condemned by grammarians, but it is sometimes met with in respectable writers; it occurs most frequently in newspaper paragraphs and in hasty compositions. See Worcester's "Universal and Critical Dictionary."'—Weld's 'Grammar,' pp. 118 and 180. 'When we say, "The house is building," the advocates of the new theory ask, "Building what?" We might ask, in turn, when you say, "The field ploughs well,"—"Ploughs what?" "Wheat sells well,"—"Sells what?" If usage allows us to say, "Wheat sells at a dollar," in a sense that is not active, why may we not say, "Wheat is selling at a dollar," in a sense that is not active?'—Hart's 'Grammar,' p. 76. 'The prevailing practice of the best authors is in favor of the simple form; as, "The house is building."'—Wells' 'School Grammar,' p. 148. 'Several other expressions of this sort now and then occur, such as the new-fangled and most uncouth solecism "*is being done*," for the good old English idiom "*is doing*"—an absurd periphrasis driving out a pointed and pithy turn of the English language.'—'N. A. Review,' quoted by Mr. Wells, p. 148.

'The phrase, "is being built," and others of a similar kind, have been for a few years insinuating themselves into our language; still they are not English.'—Harrison's 'Rise, Progress, and Present Structure of the English Language.' 'This mode of expression [the house is being built] is becoming quite common. It is liable, however, to several important objections. It appears formal and pedantic. It has not, as far as I know, the support of any respectable grammarian. The easy and natural expression is, "The house is building."'—Prof. J. W. Gibbs."

Mr. Richard Grant White, in his "Words and Their Uses," expresses his opinion of the locution *is being* in this wise: "In bad eminence, at the head of those intruders in language which to many persons seem to be of established respectability, but the right of which to be at all is not fully admitted, stands out the form of speech *is being done*, or rather, *is being*, which, about seventy or eighty years ago, began to affront the eye, torment the ear, and assault the common sense of the speaker of plain and idiomatic English." Mr. White devotes thirty pages of his book to the discussion of the subject, and adduces evidence that is more than sufficient to convince those who are content with an *ex parte* examination that "it can hardly be that such an incongruous and ridiculous form of speech as *is being done* was contrived by a man who, by any stretch of the name, should be included among grammarians."

Mr. George P. Marsh, in his "Lectures on the English Language," says that the deviser of the locution in question was "some grammatical pretender," and that it is "an awkward neologism, which neither convenience, intelligibility, nor syntactical congruity demands."

To these gentlemen, and to those who are of their way of thinking with regard to *is being*, Dr. Fitzedward Hall

replies at some length, in an article published in "Scribner's Monthly" for April, 1872. Dr. Hall writes:

"'All really well educated in the English tongue lament the many innovations introduced into our language from America; and I doubt if more than one of these novelties deserve acceptation. That one is, substituting a compound participle for an active verb used in a neuter signification: for instance, "The house is *being built*," instead of, "The house is *building*."' Such is the assertion and such is the opinion of some anonymous luminary,* who, for his liberality in welcoming a supposed Americanism, is somewhat in advance of the herd of his countrymen. Almost any popular expression which is considered as a novelty, a Briton is pretty certain to assume, off-hand, to have originated on our side of the Atlantic. Of the assertion I have quoted, no proof is offered; and there is little probability that its author had any to offer. 'Are being,' in the phrase 'are being thrown up,'† is spoken of in 'The North American Review'‡ as 'an outrage upon English idiom, "to be detested, abhorred, execrated, and given over to six thousand" penny-paper editors'; and the fact is, that phrases of the form here pointed at have hitherto enjoyed very much less favor with us than with the English.

"As lately as 1860, Dr. Worcester, referring to *is being built*, etc., while acknowledging that 'this new form has

* "L. W. K., CLK., LL. D., EX. SCH., T. C., D. Of this reverend gentleman's personality I know nothing. He does not say exactly what he means; but what he means is, yet, unmistakable. The extract given above is from 'Public Opinion,' January 20, 1866."

† "The analysis, taken for granted in this quotation, of 'are being thrown up' into 'are being' and 'thrown up' will be dealt with in the sequel, and shown to be untenable."

‡ "Vol. xlv, p. 504 (1837)."

been used by some respectable writers,' speaks of it as having 'been introduced' 'within a few years.' Mr. Richard Grant White, by a most peculiar process of ratiocination, endeavors to prove that what Dr. Worcester calls 'this new form' came into existence just fifty-six years ago. He premises that in Jarvis's translation of 'Don Quixote,' published in 1742, there occurs 'were carrying,' and that this, in the edition of 1818, is sophisticated into 'were being carried.' 'This change,' continues our logician, 'and the appearance of *is being* with a perfect participle in a very few books published between A. D. 1815 and 1820, indicate the former period as that of the origin of this phraseology, which, although more than half a century old, is still pronounced a novelty as well as a nuisance.'

"Who, in the next place, devised our modern imperfects passive? The question is not, originally, of my asking; but, as the learned are at open feud on the subject, it should not be passed by in silence. Its deviser is, more than likely, as undiscoverable as the name of the valiant antediluvian who first tasted an oyster. But the deductive character of the miscreant is another thing; and hereon there is a war between the philosophers. Mr. G. P. Marsh, as if he had actually spotted the wretched creature, passionately and categorically denounces him as 'some grammatical pretender.' 'But,' replies Mr. White, 'that it is the work of any grammarian is more than doubtful. Grammarians, with all their faults, do not deform language with fantastic solecisms, or even seek to enrich it with new and startling verbal combinations. They rather resist novelty, and devote themselves to formulating that which use has already established.' In the same page with this, Mr. White compliments the great unknown as 'some pre-

cise and feeble-minded soul,' and elsewhere calls him 'some pedantic writer of the last generation.' To add even one word toward a solution of the knotty point here indicated transcends, I confess, my utmost competence. It is painful to picture to one's self the agonizing emotions with which certain philologists would contemplate an authentic effigy of the Attila of speech who, by his *is being built* or *is being done*, first offered violence to the whole circle of the proprieties. So far as I have observed, the first grammar that exhibits them is that of Mr. R. S. Skillern, M. A., the first edition of which was published at Gloucester in 1802. Robert Southey had not, on the 9th of October, 1795, been out of his minority quite two months when, evidently delivering himself in a way that had already become familiar enough, he wrote of 'a fellow whose uttermost upper grinder *is being torn out* by the roots by a mutton-fisted barber.' * This is in a letter. But repeated instances of the same kind of expression are seen in Southey's graver writings. Thus, in his 'Colloquies,' etc.,† we read of 'such [nunneries] as at this time *are being reëstablished*.'

"'While my hand *was being drest* by Mr. Young, I spoke for the first time,' wrote Coleridge, in March, 1797.

"Charles Lamb speaks of realities which '*are being acted* before us,' and of 'a man who *is being strangled*.'

"Walter Savage Landor, in an imaginary conversation, represents Pitt as saying: 'The man who possesses them may read Swedenborg and Kant while he *is being tossed* in a blanket.' Again: 'I have seen nobles, men and women,

* "'The Life and Correspondence of the late Robert Southey,' vol. i, p. 249."

† "Vol. i, p. 338. 'A student who *is being crammed*'; 'that verb *is* eternally *being declined*.'—'The Doctor,' pp. 38 and 40 (monotome ed.)."

kneeling in the street before these bishops, when no ceremony of the Catholic Church *was being performed*.' Also, in a translation from Catullus: 'Some criminal *is being tried* for murder.'

"Nor does Mr. De Quincey scruple at such English as 'made and *being made*,' 'the bride that *was being married* to him,' and 'the shafts of Heaven *were* even now *being forged*.' On one occasion he writes, 'Not done, not even (according to modern purism) *being done*'; as if 'purism' meant exactness, rather than the avoidance of neoterism.

"I need, surely, name no more, among the dead, who found *is being built*, or the like, acceptable. 'Simple-minded common people and those of culture were alike protected against it by their attachment to the idiom of their mother tongue, with which they felt it to be directly at variance.' So Mr. White informs us. But the writers whom I have quoted are formidable exceptions. Even Mr. White will scarcely deny to them the title of 'people of culture.'

"So much for offenders past repentance; and we all know that the sort of phraseology under consideration is daily becoming more and more common. The best written of the English reviews, magazines, and journals are perpetually marked by it; and some of the choicest of living English writers employ it freely. Among these, it is enough if I specify Bishop Wilberforce and Mr. Charles Reade.*

"Extracts from Bishop Jewel downward being also given, Lord Macaulay, Mr. Dickens, 'The Atlantic Monthly,' and 'The Brooklyn Eagle' are alleged by Mr. White in proof

* "In 'Put Yourself in his Place,' chapter x, he writes: 'She basked in the present delight, and looked as if she *was being taken* to heaven by an angel.'"

that people still use such phrases as 'Chelsea Hospital *was building*,' and 'the train *was preparing*.' 'Hence we see,' he adds,* 'that the form *is being done*, *is being made*, *is being built*, lacks the support of authoritative usage from the period of the earliest classical English to the present day.' I fully concur with Mr. White in regarding 'neither "The Brooklyn Eagle" nor Mr. Dickens as a very high authority in the use of language'; yet, when he has renounced the aid of these contemned straws, what has he to rest his inference on, as to the present day, but the practice of Lord Macaulay and 'The Atlantic Monthly'? Those who think fit will bow to the dictatorship here prescribed to them; but there may be those with whom the classic sanction of Southey, Coleridge, and Landor will not be wholly void of weight. All scholars are aware that, to convey the sense of the imperfects passive, our ancestors, centuries ago, prefixed, with *is*, etc., *in*, afterward corrupted into *a*, to a verbal substantive. 'The house *is in building*' could be taken to mean nothing but *ædes ædificantur*; and, when the *in* gave place to *a*,† it was still manifest enough, from the context, that *building* was governed by a preposition. The second stage of change, however, namely, when the *a* was omitted, entailed, in many cases, great danger of confusion. In the early part of the last century, when English was undergoing what was then thought to be purification, the polite world substantially resigned *is a-building* to the vulgar. Toward the close of the same century, when, under the influence of free thought, it began to be felt that even ideas had a right to faithful and une-

* "'Words,' etc., p. 340."

† "Thomas Fuller writes: 'At his arrival, the last stake of the Christians was *on losing*.'—'The Historie of the Holy Warre,' p. 218 (ed. 1647)."

quivocal representation, a just resentment of ambiguity was evidenced in the creation of *is being built.* The lament is too late that the instinct of reformation did not restore the old form. It has gone forever ; and we are now to make the best of its successors. '"The brass *is forging*," ' in the opinion of Dr. Johnson, is 'a vicious expression, probably corrupted from a phrase more pure, but now somewhat obsolete, . . . "the brass *is a-forging.*" ' Yet, with a true Tory's timidity and aversion to change, it is not surprising that he went on preferring what he found established, vicious as it confessedly was, to the end. But was the expression 'vicious' solely because it was a corruption? In 1787 William Beckford wrote as follows of the fortune-tellers of Lisbon: '*I saw one dragging into light*, as I passed by the ruins of a palace thrown down by the earthquake. Whether a familiar of the Inquisition was griping her in his clutches, or *whether she was taking to account by some disappointed votary*, I will not pretend to answer.' Are the expressions here italicized either perspicuous or graceful? Whatever we are to have in their place, we should be thankful to get quit of them.

"Inasmuch as, concurrently with *building* for the active participle, and *being built* for the corresponding passive participle, we possessed the former, with *is* prefixed, as the active present imperfect, it is in rigid accordance with the symmetry of our verb that, to construct the passive present-imperfect, we prefix *is* to the latter, producing the form *is being built.* Such, in its greatest simplicity, is the procedure which, as will be seen, has provoked a very levanter of ire and vilification. But anything that is new will be excepted to by minds of a certain order. Their tremulous and impatient dread of removing ancient landmarks even disqualifies them for thoroughly investigating its character

and pretensions. In *has built* and *will build*, we find the active participle perfect and the active infinitive subjoined to auxiliaries; and so, in *has been built* and *will be built*, the passive participle perfect and the passive infinitive are subjoined to auxiliaries. In *is building* and *is being built*, we have, in strict harmony with the constitution of the perfect and future tenses, an auxiliary followed by the active participle present and the passive participle present. *Built* is determined as active or passive by the verbs which qualify it, *have* and *be*; and the grammarians are right in considering it, when embodied in *has built*, as active, since its analogue, embodied in *has been built*, is the exclusively passive *been built*. Besides this, *has been* + *built* would signify something like *has existed*, *built*,* which is plainly neuter. We are debarred, therefore, from such an analysis; and, by parity of reasoning, we may not resolve *is being built* into *is being*+*built*. It must have been an inspiration of analogy, felt or unfelt, that suggested the form I am discussing. *Is being*+*built*, as it can mean, pretty nearly, only *exists*, *built*, would never have been proposed as adequate to convey any but a neuter sense; whereas it was perfectly natural for a person aiming to express a passive sense to prefix *is* to the passive concretion *being built*.†

"The analogical justification of *is being built* which I have brought forward is so obvious that, as it occurred to

* "I express myself in this manner because I distinguish between *be* and *exist*."

† "Samuel Richardson writes: 'Jenny, who attends me here, has more than once hinted to me that Miss Jervis loves to sit up late, either reading or *being read to* by Anne, who, though she reads well, is not fond of the task.'—'Sir Charles Grandison,' vol. iii, p. 46 (ed. 1754).

"The transition is very slight by which we pass from 'sits being read to' to 'is being read to.'"

myself more than twenty years ago, so it must have occurred spontaneously to hundreds besides. It is very singular that those who, like Mr. Marsh and Mr. White, have pondered long and painfully over locutions typified by *is being built*, should have missed the real ground of their grammatical defensibleness, and should have warmed themselves, in their opposition to them, into uttering opinions which no calm judgment can accept.

"'One who *is being beaten*' is, to Archbishop Whately, 'uncouth English.' '"The bridge *is being built*," and other phrases of the like kind, have pained the eye' of Mr. David Booth. Such phrases, according to Mr. M. Harrison, 'are not English.' To Professor J. W. Gibbs 'this mode of expression . . . appears formal and pedantic'; and 'the easy and natural expression is, "The house *is building*."'* In all this, little or nothing is discernible beyond sheer prejudice, the prejudice of those who resolve to take their stand against an innovation, regardless of its utility, and who are ready to find an argument against it in any random epithet of disparagement provoked by unreasoning aversion. And the more recent denouncers in the same line have no more reason on their side than their elder brethren.

"In Mr. Marsh's estimation, *is being built* illustrates 'corruption of language'; it is 'clumsy and unidiomatic'; it is 'at best but a philological coxcombry'; it 'is an awkward neologism, which neither convenience, intelligibility, nor syntactical congruity demands, and the use of which ought, therefore, to be discountenanced, as an attempt at the artificial improvement of the language in a point which needed no amendment.' Again, 'To reject' *is building* in favor of the modern phrase 'is to violate the laws of lan-

* "I am here indebted to the last edition of Dr. Worcester's 'Dictionary,' preface, p. xxxix."

guage by an arbitrary change ; and, in this particular case, the proposed substitute is at war with the genius of the English tongue.' Mr. Marsh seems to have fancied that, wherever he points out a beauty in *is building*, he points out, inclusively, a blemish in *is being built*.

"The fervor and feeling with which Mr. White advances to the charge are altogether tropical. 'The full absurdity of this phrase, the essence of its nonsense, seems not to have been hitherto pointed out.' It is not 'consistent with reason'; and it is not 'conformed to the normal development of the language.' It is 'a monstrosity, the illogical, confusing, inaccurate, unidiomatic character of which I have at some length, but yet imperfectly, set forth.' Finally, 'In fact, it means nothing, and is the most incongruous combination of words and ideas that ever attained respectable usage in any civilized language.' These be 'prave 'ords'; and it seems a pity that so much sterling vituperative ammunition should be expended in vain. And that it is so expended thinks Mr. White himself; for, though passing sentence in the spirit of a Jeffreys, he is not really on the judgment-seat, but on the lowest hassock of despair. As concerns the mode of expression exemplified by *is being built*, he owns that 'to check its diffusion would be a hopeless undertaking.' If so, why not reserve himself for service against some evil not avowedly beyond remedy?

"Again we read, 'Some precise and feeble-minded soul, having been taught that there is a passive voice in English, and that, for instance, *building* is an active participle, and *builded* or *built* a passive, felt conscientious scruples at saying "the house *is building*." For what could the house build?' As children say at play, Mr. White burns here. If it had occurred to him that the 'conscientious scruples' of his hypothetical, 'precise, and feeble-

minded soul' were roused by *been built*, not by *built*, I suspect his chapter on *is being built* would have been much shorter than it is at present, and very different. 'The fatal absurdity in this phrase consists,' he tells us, 'in the combination of *is* with *being*; in the making of the verb *to be* a supplement, or, in grammarians' phrase, an auxiliary to itself—an absurdity so palpable, so monstrous, so ridiculous, that it should need only to be pointed out to be scouted.'* Lastly, 'The question is thus narrowed simply to this, Does *to be being* (*esse ens*) mean anything more or other than *to be?*'

"Having convicted Mr. White of a mistaken analysis, I am not concerned with the observations which he founds on his mistake. However, even if his analysis had been correct, some of his arguments would avail him nothing. For instance, *is being built*, on his understanding of it, that is to say, *is being* + *built*, he represents by *ens ædificatus est*, as 'the supposed corresponding Latin phrase.'† The Latin is illegitimate; and he infers that, therefore, the English is the same. But *ædificans est*, a translation, on the model which he offers, of the active *is building*, is quite as illegitimate as *ens ædificatus est*. By parity of *non-sequitur*, we are, therefore, to surrender the active *is building*. Assume that a phrase in a given language is indefensible unless it

* "'Words and their Uses,' p. 353."

† "'*It is being* is simply equal to *it is*. And, in the supposed corresponding Latin phrases, *ens factus est*, *ens ædificatus est* (the obsoleteness of *ens* as a participle being granted), the monstrosity is not in the use of *ens* with *factus*, but in that of *ens* with *est*. The absurdity is, in Latin, just what it is in English, the use of *is* with *being*, the making of the verb *to be* a complement to itself.'—*Ibid.*, pp. 354, 355.

"Apparently, Mr. White recognizes no more difference between *supplement* and *complement* than he recognizes between *be* and *exist*. See the extract I have made above, from p. 353."

has its counterpart in some other language; from the very conception and definition of an idiom every idiom is illegitimate.

"I now pass to another point. '*To be* and *to exist* are,' to Mr. White's apprehension, 'perfect synonyms, or more nearly perfect, perhaps, than any two verbs in the language. In some of their meanings there is a shade of difference, but in others there is none whatever; and the latter are those which serve our present purpose. When we say, "He, *being* forewarned of danger, fled," we say, "He, *existing* forewarned of danger, fled." When we say that a thing *is* done, we say that it *exists* done. . . . *Is being done* is simply *exists existing done*.' But, since *is* and *exists* are equipollent, and so *being* and *existing*, *is being* is the same as the unimpeachable *is existing*. Q. *non* E. D. *Is existing* ought, of course, to be no less objectionable to Mr. White than *is being*. Just as absurd, too, should he reckon the Italian *sono stato*, *era stato*, *sia stato*, *fossi stato*, *saro stato*, *sarei stato*, *essere stato*, and *essendo stato*. For in Italian both *essere* and *stare* are required to make up the verb substantive, as in Latin both *esse* and the offspring of *fuere* are required; and *stare*, primarily 'to stand,' is modified into a true auxiliary. The alleged 'full absurdity of this phrase,' to wit, *is being built*, 'the essence of its nonsense,' vanishes thus into thin air. So I was about to comment bluntly, not forgetting to regret that any gentleman's cultivation of logic should fructify in the shape of irrepressible tendencies to suicide. But this would be precipitate. Agreeably to one of Mr. White's judicial placita, which I make no apology for citing twice, 'no man who has preserved all his senses will doubt for a moment that "to exist a mastiff or a mule" is absolutely the same as "to be a mastiff or a mule."' Declining to admit their identity, I have not preserved all

my senses ; and, accordingly—though it may be in me the very superfetation of lunacy—I would caution the reader to keep a sharp eye on my arguments, hereabouts particularly. The Cretan, who, in declaring all Cretans to be liars, left the question of his veracity doubtful to all eternity, fell into a pit of his own digging. Not unlike the unfortunate Cretan, Mr. White has tumbled headlong into his own snare. It was, for the rest, entirely unavailing that he insisted on the insanity of those who should gainsay his fundamental postulate. Sanity, of a crude sort, may accept it ; and sanity may put it to a use other than its propounder's.

"Mr. Marsh, after setting forth the all-sufficiency of *is building*, in the passive sense, goes on to say: 'The reformers who object to the phrase I am defending must, in consistency, employ the proposed substitute with all passive participles, and in other tenses as well as the present. They must say, therefore, "The subscription-paper *is being missed*, but I know that a considerable sum *is being wanted* to make up the amount" ; "the great Victoria Bridge *has been being built* more than two years" ; "when I reach London, the ship Leviathan *will be being built*" ; "if my orders had been followed, the coat *would have been being made yesterday*" ; "if the house *had* then *been being built*, the mortar *would have been being mixed.*"' We may reply that, while awkward instances of the old form are most abundant in our literature, there is no fear that the repulsive elaborations which have been worked out in ridicule of the new forms will prove to have been anticipations of future usage. There was a time when, as to their adverbs, people compared them, to a large extent, with *-er* and *-est*, or with *more* and *most*, just as their ear or pleasure dictated. They wrote *plainlier* and *plainliest*, or *more plainly* and *most plainly ;* and some adverbs, as *early*, *late*, *often*, *seldom*, and

***soon***, we still compare in a way now become anomalous. And as our forefathers treated their adverbs we still treat many adjectives. *Furthermore*, *obligingness*, *preparedness*, and *designedly* seem quite natural; yet we do not feel that they authorize us to talk of 'the *seeingness* of the eye,' 'the *understoodness* of a sentence,' or of 'a statement *acknowledgedly* correct.' 'The now too notorious fact' is tolerable; but 'the never to be sufficiently execrated monster Bonaparte' is intolerable. The sun may be *shorn* of his splendor; but we do not allow cloudy weather to *shear* him of it. How, then, can any one claim that a man who prefers to say *is being built* should say *has been being built?* Are not awkward instances of the old form, typified by *is building*, as easily to be picked out of extant literature as such instances of the new form, likely ever to be used, are to be invented? And 'the reformers' have not forsworn their ears. Mr. Marsh, at p. 135 of his admirable 'Lectures,' lays down that 'the adjective *reliable*, in the sense of *worthy of confidence*, is altogether unidiomatic'; and yet, at p. 112, he writes '*reliable* evidence.' Again, at p. 396 of the same work, he rules that *whose*, in 'I passed a house *whose* windows were open,' is 'by no means yet fully established'; and at p. 145 of his very learned 'Man and Nature' he writes 'a quadrangular pyramid, the perpendicular of *whose* sides,' etc. Really, if his own judgments sit so very loose on his practical conscience, we may, without being chargeable with exaction, ask of him to relax a little the rigor of his requirements at the hands of his neighbors.

"Beckford's Lisbon fortune-teller, before had into court, was '*dragging* into light,' and, perchance, '*was taking* to account.' Many moderns would say and write '*being dragged* into light,' and '*was being taken* to account.' But, if we

are to trust the conservative critics, in comparison with expressions of the former pattern, those of the latter are 'uncouth,' 'clumsy,' 'awkward neologisms,' 'philological coxcombries,' 'formal and pedantic,' 'incongruous and ridiculous forms of speech,' 'illogical, confusing, inaccurate monstrosities.' Moreover, they are neither 'consistent with reason' nor 'conformed to the normal development of the language'; they are 'at war with the genius of the English tongue'; they are 'unidiomatic'; they are 'not English.' In passing, if Mr. Marsh will so define the term *unidiomatic* as to evince that it has any applicability to the case in hand, or if he will arrest and photograph 'the genius of the English tongue,' so that we may know the original when we meet with it, he will confer a public favor. And now I submit for consideration whether the sole strength of those who decry *is being built* and its congeners does not consist in their talent for calling hard names. If they have not an uneasy subconsciousness that their cause is weak, they would, at least, do well in eschewing the violence to which, for want of something better, the advocates of weak causes proverbially resort.

"I once had a friend who, for some microscopic penumbra of heresy, was charged, in the words of his accuser, with 'as near an approach to the sin against the Holy Ghost as is practicable to human infirmity.' Similarly, on one view, the feeble potencies of philological turpitude seem to have exhibited their most consummate realization in engendering *is being built*. The supposed enormity perpetrated in its production, provided it had fallen within the sphere of ethics, would, at the least, have ranked, with its denunciators, as a brand-new exemplification of total depravity. But, after all, what incontestable defect in it has any one succeeded in demonstrating? Mr. White, in op-

posing to the expression objections based on an erroneous analysis, simply lays a phantom of his own evoking; and, so far as I am informed, other impugners of *is being built* have, absolutely, no argument whatever against it over and beyond their repugnance to novelty. Subjected to a little untroubled contemplation, it would, I am confident, have ceased long ago to be matter of controversy; but the dust of prejudice and passion, which so distempers the intellectual vision of theologians and politicians, is seen to make, with ruthless impartiality, no exception of the perspicacity of philologists.

"Prior to the evolution of *is being built* and *was being built*, we possessed no discriminate equivalents to *ædificatur* and *ædificabatur; is built* and *was built*, by which they were rendered, corresponding exactly to *ædificatus est* and *ædificatus erat. Cum ædificaretur* was to us the same as *ædificabatur.* On the wealth of the Greek in expressions of imperfect passive I need not dwell. With rare exceptions, the Romans were satisfied with the present-imperfect and the past-imperfect; and we, on the comparatively few occasions which present themselves for expressing other imperfects, shall be sure to have recourse to the old forms rather than to the new, or else to use periphrases.* The purists may, accordingly, dismiss their apprehensions, especially as the neoterists have, clearly, a keener horror of phraseological ungainliness than themselves. One may

* "'But those things which, *being not now doing*, or having not yet been done, have a natural aptitude to exist hereafter, may be properly said to appertain to the future.'—Harris's 'Hermes,' book I, chap. viii (p. 155, foot-note, ed. 1771). For Harris's *being not now doing*, which is to translate μὴ γινόμενα, the modern school, if they pursued uniformity with more of fidelity than of taste, would have to put *being not now being done.* There is not much to choose between the two."

have no hesitation about saying 'the house *is being built*,' and may yet recoil from saying that 'it *should have been being built* last Christmas'; and the same person—just as, provided he did not feel a harshness, inadequacy, and ambiguity in the passive 'the house *is building*,' he would use the expression—will, more likely than not, elect *is in preparation* preferentially to *is being prepared*. If there are any who, in their zealotry for the congruous, choose to adhere to the new form in its entire range of exchangeability for the old, let it be hoped that they will find, in Mr. Marsh's speculative approbation of consistency, full amends for the discomfort of encountering smiles or frowns. At the same time, let them be mindful of the career of Mr. White, with his black flag and no quarter. The dead Polonius was, in Hamlet's phrase, at supper, 'not where he eats, but where he *is eaten*.' Shakespeare, to Mr. White's thinking, in this wise expressed himself at the best, and deserves not only admiration therefor, but to be imitated. 'While the ark *was built*,' 'while the ark *was prepared*,' writes Mr. White himself.* Shakespeare is commended for his ambiguous *is eaten*, though *in eating* or *an eating* would have been not only correct in his day, but, where they would have come in his sentence, univocal. With equal reason a man would be entitled to commendation for tearing his mutton-chops with his fingers, when he might cut them up with a knife and fork. '*Is eaten*,' says Mr. White, 'does not mean *has been eaten*.' Very true; but a continuous unfinished passion—Polonius's still undergoing manducation, to speak Johnsonese—was in Shakespeare's mind; and his words describe a passion no longer in generation. The King of Denmark's lord chamberlain had no precedent in Herod, when 'he *was eaten* of worms'; the original, γενόμενος

* "'Words and their Uses,' p. 343."

σκωληκόβρωτος, yielding, but for its participle, 'he became worm-eaten.'

"Having now done with Mr. White, I am anxious, before taking leave of him, to record, with all emphasis, that it would be the grossest injustice to write of his elegant 'Life and Genius of Shakespeare,' a book which does credit to American literature, in the tone which I have found unavoidable in dealing with his 'Words and their Uses.'"

The student of English who has honestly weighed the arguments on both sides of the question, must, I believe, be of opinion that our language is the richer for having two forms for expressing the Progressive Passive. Further, he must, I believe, be of opinion that in very many cases he conforms to the most approved usage of our time by employing the old form; that, however, if he were to employ the old form in all cases, his meaning would sometimes be uncertain.

**It.** Cobbett discourses of this little neuter pronoun in this wise: "The word *it* is the greatest troubler that I know of in language. It is so small and so convenient that few are careful enough in using it. Writers seldom spare this word. Whenever they are at a loss for either a nominative or an objective to their sentence, they, without any kind of ceremony, clap in an *it*. A very remarkable instance of this pressing of poor *it* into actual service, contrary to the laws of grammar and of sense, occurs in a piece of composition, where we might, with justice, insist on correctness. This piece is on the subject of grammar; it is a piece written by a *Doctor of Divinity* and read by him to students in grammar and language in an academy; and the very sentence that I am now about to quote is selected by the author of a grammar as testimony of high

authority in favor of the excellence of his work. Surely, if correctness be ever to be expected, it must be in a case like this. I allude to two sentences in the 'Charge of the Reverend Doctor Abercrombie to the Senior Class of the Philadelphia Academy,' published in 1806; which sentences have been selected and published by Mr. Lindley Murray as a testimonial of the *merits* of his grammar; and which sentences are by Mr. Murray given to us in the following words: 'The unwearied exertions of this gentleman *have* done more toward elucidating the obscurities and embellishing the structure of our language than any *other writer* on the subject. *Such a work* has long been wanted, and from the success with which *it* is executed, can not be too highly appreciated.'

"As in the learned Doctor's opinion obscurities can be elucidated, and as in the same opinion Mr. Murray is an able hand at this kind of work, it would not be amiss were the grammarian to try his skill upon this article from the hand of his dignified eulogist; for here is, if one may use the expression, a constellation of obscurities. Our poor oppressed *it*, which we find forced into the Doctor's service in the second sentence, relates to '*such a work*,' though this work is nothing that has an existence, notwithstanding it is said to be '*executed*.' In the first sentence, the 'exertions' become, all of a sudden, a '*writer*': the *exertions* have done more than 'any *other* writer'; for, mind you, it is not the *gentleman* that has done anything; it is 'the *exertions*' that *have* done what is said to be done. The word *gentleman* is in the possessive case, and has nothing to do with the action of the sentence. Let us give the sentence a turn, and the Doctor and the grammarian will hear how it will sound. 'This gentleman's *exertions* have done more than any *other writer*.' This is on a level with 'This

gentleman's *dog* has killed more hares than any *other sportsman.*' No doubt Doctor Abercrombie *meant* to say, 'The exertions of this gentleman have done more *than those* of any other writer. Such a work as this gentleman's has long been wanted; his work, seeing the successful manner of its execution, can not be too highly commended.' *Meant!* No doubt at all of that! And when we hear a Hampshire ploughboy say, 'Poll Cherrycheck have giv'd a thick handkecher,' we know very well that he *means* to say, 'Poll Cherrycheek has given me this handkerchief'; and yet we are too apt to *laugh at him* and to call him *ignorant;* which is wrong, because he has no pretensions to a knowledge of grammar, and he may be very skillful as a ploughboy. However, we will not laugh at Doctor Abercrombie, whom I knew, many years ago, for a very kind and worthy man. But, if we may, in any case, be allowed to laugh at the ignorance of our fellow-creatures, that case certainly does arise when we see a professed grammarian, the author of voluminous precepts and examples on the subject of grammar, producing, in imitation of the possessors of valuable medical secrets, testimonials vouching for the efficacy of his literary panacea, and when, in those testimonials, we find most flagrant instances of bad grammar.

"However, my dear James, let this strong and striking instance of the misuse of the word *it* serve you in the way of caution. Never put an *it* upon paper without thinking well of what you are about. When I see many *its* in a page, I always tremble for the writer."

**Jeopardize.** This is a modern word which we could easily do without, as it means neither more nor less than its venerable progenitor *to jeopard*, which is greatly preferred by all careful writers.

**Just going to.** Instead of "I am *just going to* go," it is better to say, "I am just *about* to go."

**Kids.** "This is another vile contraction. Habit blinds people to the unseemliness of a term like this. How would it sound if one should speak of silk gloves as *silks?*"

**Kind.** See POLITE.

**Knights Templars.** The name of this ancient body has been adopted by a branch of the Masonic fraternity, but in a perverted form—*Knights Templar;* and this form is commonly seen in print, whether referring to the old knights or to their modern imitators. This doubtless is due to the erroneous impression that *Templar* is an adjective, and so can not take the plural form; while in fact it is a case of two nouns in apposition—a double designation—meaning Knights of the order of Templars. Hence the plural should be *Knights Templars*, and not *Knights Templar*. Members of the contemporaneous order of St. John of Jerusalem were commonly called Knights Hospitallers.

**Lady.** To use the term *lady*, whether in the singular or in the plural, simply to designate the sex, is in the worst possible taste. There is a kind of pin-feather gentility which seems to have a settled aversion to using the terms *man* and *woman*. Gentlemen and ladies establish their claims to being called such by their bearing, and not by arrogating to themselves, *even indirectly*, the titles. In England, the title *lady* is properly correlative to *lord;* but there, as in this country, it is used as a term of complaisance, and is appropriately applied to women whose lives are exemplary, and who have received that school and home education which enables them to appear to advantage in the better circles of society. Such expressions as "She is a fine *lady*, a clever *lady*, a well-dressed *lady*, a good *lady*, a

modest *lady*, a charitable *lady*, an amiable *lady*, a handsome *lady*, a fascinating *lady*," and the like, are studiously avoided by persons of refinement. *Ladies* say, "we *women*, the *women* of America, *women's* apparel," and so on; *vulgar* women talk about "us *ladies*, the *ladies* of America, *ladies'* apparel," and so on. If a woman of culture and refinement—in short, a lady—is compelled from any cause soever to work in a store, she is quite content to be called a sales-*woman*; not so, however, with your young woman who, being in a store, is in a better position than ever before. She, Heaven bless her! boils with indignation if she is not denominated a sales *lady*. Lady is often the proper term to use, and then it would be very improper to use any other; but it is very certain that the terms *lady* and *gentleman* are least used by those persons who are most worthy of being designated by them. With a nice discrimination worthy of special notice, one of our daily papers recently said: "Miss Jennie Halstead, daughter of the proprietor of the 'Cincinnati Commercial,' is one of the most brilliant young *women* in Ohio."

In a late number of the "London Queen" was the following: "The terms *ladies* and *gentlemen* become in themselves vulgarisms when misapplied, and the improper application of the wrong term at the wrong time makes all the difference in the world to ears polite. Thus, calling a man a *gentleman* when he should be called a *man*, or speaking of a man as a *man* when he should be spoken of as a *gentleman*; or alluding to a lady as a *woman* when she should be alluded to as a *lady*, or speaking of a woman as a *lady* when she should properly be termed a *woman*. Tact and a sense of the fitness of things decide these points, there being no fixed rule to go upon to determine when a man is a *man* or when he is a *gentleman*; and, although he

is far oftener termed the one than the other, he does not thereby lose his attributes of a gentleman. In common parlance, a man is always a *man* to a man, and never a *gentleman;* to a woman, he is occasionally a *man* and occasionally a *gentleman;* but a man would far oftener term a woman a *woman* than he would term her a *lady*. When a man makes use of an adjective in speaking of a lady, he almost invariably calls her a *woman*. Thus, he would say, 'I met a rather agreeable *woman* at dinner last night'; but he would *not* say, 'I met an agreeable *lady*'; but he might say, 'A *lady*, a friend of mine, told me,' etc., when he would *not* say, 'A *woman*, a friend of mine, told me,' etc. Again, a man would say, 'Which of the *ladies* did you take in to dinner?' He would certainly not say, 'Which of the *women*,' etc.

"Speaking of people *en masse*, it would be to belong to a very advanced school to refer to them in conversation as 'men and women,' while it would be all but vulgar to style them 'ladies and gentlemen,' the compromise between the two being to speak of them as 'ladies and men.' Thus a lady would say, 'I have asked two or three ladies and several men'; she would not say, 'I have asked several men and women'; neither would she say, 'I have asked several ladies and gentlemen.' And, speaking of numbers, it would be very usual to say, 'There were a great many ladies, and but very few men present,' or, 'The ladies were in the majority, so few men being present.' Again, a lady would not say, 'I expect two or three men,' but she would say, 'I expect two or three gentlemen.' When people are on ceremony with each other [*one another*], they might, perhaps, in speaking of a man, call him a *gentleman;* but, otherwise, it would be more usual to speak of him as a *man*. Ladies, when speaking of each other [*one another*], usually

employ the term *woman* in preference to that of *lady*. Thus they would say, 'She is a very good-natured *woman*,' 'What sort of a *woman* is she?' the term *lady* being entirely out of place under such circumstances. Again, the term young *lady* gives place as far as possible to the term *girl*, although it greatly depends upon the amount of intimacy existing as to which term is employed."

**Language.** A note in Worcester's Dictionary says: "*Language* is a very general term, and is not strictly confined to utterance by words, as it is also expressed by the countenance, by the eyes, and by signs. *Tongue* refers especially to an original language; as, 'the Hebrew *tongue*.' The modern languages are derived from the original *tongues*." If this be correct, then he who speaks French, German, English, Spanish, and Italian, may properly say that he speaks five *languages*, but only one *tongue*.

**Lay—Lie.** Errors are frequent in the use of these two irregular verbs. *Lay* is often used for *lie*, and *lie* is sometimes used for *lay*. This confusion in their use is due, in some measure, doubtless, to the circumstance that *lay* appears in both verbs, it being the imperfect tense of *to lie*. We say, "A mason *lays* bricks," "A ship *lies* at anchor," etc. "I must *lie* down"; "I must *lay* myself down"; "I must *lay* this book on the table"; "He *lies* on the grass"; "He *lays* his plans well"; "He *lay* on the grass"; "He *laid* it away"; "He has *lain* in bed long enough"; "He has *laid up* some money," "*in* a stock," "*down* the law"; "He is *laying* out the grounds"; "Ships *lie* at the wharf"; "Hens *lay* eggs"; "The ship *lay* at anchor"; "The hen *laid* an egg." It will be seen that *lay* always expresses transitive action, and that *lie* expresses rest.

"Here *lies* our sovereign lord, the king,
Whose word no man relies on;
He never says a foolish thing,
Nor ever does a wise one."

—Written on the bedchamber door of Charles II, by the Earl of Rochester.

**Learn.** This verb was long ago used as a synonym of *teach*, but in this sense it is now obsolete. To *teach* is to give instruction; to *learn* is to take instruction. "I will *learn*, if you will *teach* me." See TEACH.

**Leave.** There are grammarians who insist that this verb should not be used without an object, as, for example, it is used in such sentences as, "When do you leave?" "I leave to-morrow." The object of the verb—home, town, or whatever it may be—is, of course, understood; but this, say these gentlemen, is not permissible. On this point opinions will, I think, differ; they will, however, not differ with regard to the vulgarity of using *leave* in the sense of *let;* thus, "*Leave* me be"; "*Leave* it alone"; "*Leave* her be—don't bother her"; "*Leave* me see it."

**Lend.** See LOAN.

**Lengthy.** This word is of comparatively recent origin, and, though it is said to be an Americanism, it is a good deal used in England. The most careful writers, however, both here and elsewhere, much prefer the word *long:* "a *long* discussion," "a *long* discourse," etc.

**Leniency.** Mr. Gould calls this word and *lenience* "two philological abortions." *Lenity* is undoubtedly the proper word to use, though both Webster and Worcester do recognize *leniency* and *lenience.*

**Less.** This word is much used instead of *fewer. Less* relates to quantity; *fewer* to number. Instead of, "There were not *less* than twenty persons present," we should

say, "There were not *fewer* than twenty persons present."

**Lesser.** This form of the comparative of *little* is accounted a corruption of *less*. It may, however, be used instead of *less* with propriety in verse, and also, in some cases, in prose. We may say, for example, "Of two evils choose the *less*," or "the *lesser*." The latter form, in sentences like this, is the more euphonious.

**Liable.** Richard Grant White, in inveighing against the misuse of this word, cites the example of a member from a rural district, who called out to a man whom he met in the village, where he was in the habit of making little purchases: "I say, mister, kin yer tell me whar I'd be *li'ble* to find some beans?" See, also, APT.

**Lie.** See LAY.

**Like—As.** Both these words express similarity; *like* (adjective) comparing things, *as* (adverb) comparing action, existence, or quality. Like is followed by an object only, and does not admit of a verb in the same construction. *As* must be followed by a verb expressed or understood. We say, "He looks *like* his brother," or "He looks *as* his brother *looks*." "Do *as* I do," not "*like* I do." "You must speak *as* James does," not "*like* James does." "He died *as* he had lived, *like* a dog." "It is *as* blue *as* indigo"; i. e., "as indigo is."

**Like, To.** See LOVE.

**Likely.** See APT.

**Lit.** This form of the past participle of the verb *to light* is now obsolete. "Have you *lighted* the fire?" "The gas is *lighted*." *Het* for *heated* is a similar, but much greater, vulgarism.

**Loan—Lend.** There are those who contend that there is no such verb as *to loan*, although it has been found in

our literature for more than three hundred years. Whether there is properly such a verb or not, it is quite certain that it is only those having a vulgar *penchant* for big words who will prefer it to its synonym *lend*. Better far to say "*Lend* me your umbrella" than "*Loan* me your umbrella."

**Locate—Settle.** The use of the verb *to locate* in the sense of *to settle* is said to be an Americanism. Although the dictionaries recognize *to locate* as a neuter verb, as such it is marked "rarely used," and, in the sense of *to settle*, it is among the vulgarisms that careful speakers and writers are studious to avoid. A man *settles*, not *locates*, in Nebraska. "Where do you intend to *settle?*" not *locate*. See, also, SETTLE.

**Loggerheads.** "In the mean time France is at *loggerheads internally*."—"New York Herald," April 29, 1881. Loggerheads *internally? !*

**Looks beautifully.** It is sometimes interesting to note the difference between *vulgar* bad grammar and *genteel* bad grammar, or, more properly, between non-painstaking and painstaking bad grammar. The former uses, for example, adjectives instead of adverbs; the latter uses adverbs instead of adjectives. The former says, "This bonnet is trimmed *shocking*"; the latter says, "This bonnet looks *shockingly*." In the first sentence the epithet qualifies the verb *is trimmed*, and consequently should have its adverbial form—*shockingly;* in the second sentence the epithet qualifies the *appearance*—a noun—of the bonnet, and consequently should have its adjectival form—*shocking*. The second sentence means to say, "This bonnet presents a shocking appearance." The bonnet certainly does not really *look;* it is *looked at*, and to the *looker* its appearance is *shocking*. So we say, in like manner, of a person, that he or she looks *sweet*, or *charming*, or *beautiful*, or *handsome*,

or *horrid*, or *graceful*, or *timid*, and so on, always using an adjective. "Miss Coghlan, as Lady Teazle, looked *charmingly*." The grammar of the "New York Herald" would not have been any more incorrect if it had said that Miss Coghlan looked *gladly*, or *sadly*, or *madly*, or *delightedly*, or *pleasedly*. A person may look *sick* or *sickly*, but in both cases the qualifying word is an adjective. The verbs to *smell*, to *feel*, to *sound*, and to *appear* are also found in sentences in which the qualifying word must be an adjective and not an adverb. We say, for example, "The rose smells *sweet*"; "The butter smells *good*, or *bad*, or *fresh*"; "I feel *glad*, or *sad*, or *bad*, or *despondent*, or *annoyed*, or *nervous*"; "This construction sounds *harsh*"; "How *delightful* the country appears!"

On the other hand, to *look*, to *feel*, to *smell*, to *sound*, and to *appear* are found in sentences where the qualifying word must be an adverb; thus, "He feels his loss *keenly*"; "The king looked *graciously* on her"; "I smell it *faintly*." We might also say, "He feels *sad* [adjective], because he feels his loss *keenly*" (adverb); "He appears *well*" (adverb).

The expression, "*She seemed confusedly*, or *timidly*," is not a whit more incorrect than "*She looked beautifully*, or *charmingly*." See ADJECTIVES.

**Love—Like.** Men who are at all careful in the selection of language to express their thoughts, and have not an undue leaning toward the superlative, *love* few things: their wives, their sweethearts, their kinsmen, truth, justice, and their country. Women, on the contrary, as a rule, *love* a multitude of things, and, among their loves, the thing they perhaps love most is—taffy.

**Luggage—Baggage.** The former of these words is generally used in England, the latter in America.

**Lunch.** This word, when used as a substantive, may at the best be accounted an inelegant abbreviation of *luncheon*. The dictionaries barely recognize it. The proper phraseology to use is, "Have you *lunched?*" or, "Have you had your *luncheon?*" or, better, "Have you had *luncheon?*" as we may in most cases presuppose that the person addressed would hardly take anybody's else luncheon.

**Luxurious—Luxuriant.** The line is drawn much more sharply between these two words now than it was formerly. Luxurious was once used, to some extent at least, in the sense of *rank growth*, but now all careful writers and speakers use it in the sense of *indulging* or *delighting in luxury*. We talk of a *luxurious* table, a *luxurious* liver, *luxurious* ease, *luxurious* freedom. Luxuriant, on the other hand, is restricted to the sense of *rank*, or *excessive*, growth or production; thus, *luxuriant* weeds, *luxuriant* foliage or branches, *luxuriant* growth.

"Prune the *luxuriant*, the uncouth refine,
But show no mercy to an empty line."—Pope.

**Mad.** Professor Richard A. Proctor, in a recent number of "The Gentleman's Magazine," says: "The word *mad* in America seems nearly always to mean *angry*. For *mad*, as we use the word, Americans say *crazy*. Herein they have manifestly impaired the language." Have they?

"Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;
An 'twere to me, I would be *mad* at it."
—"Merchant of Venice."

"And being exceedingly *mad* against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."—Acts xxvi, 11.

**Make a visit.** The phrase "*make* a visit," according to Dr. Hall, whatever it once was, is no longer English.

**Male.** See FEMALE.

**Marry.** There has been some discussion, at one time and another, with regard to the use of this word. Is John Jones married *to* Sally Brown or *with* Sally Brown, or are they married to each other? Inasmuch as the woman loses her name in that of the man to whom she is wedded, and becomes a member of his family, not he of hers—inasmuch as, with few exceptions, it is her life that is merged in his—it would seem that, *properly*, Sally Brown is married *to* John Jones, and that this would be the proper way to make the announcement of their having been wedded, and not John Jones *to* Sally Brown.

There is also a difference of opinion as to whether the active or the passive form is preferable in referring to a person's wedded state. In speaking definitely of the *act* of marriage, the passive form is necessarily used with reference to either spouse. "John Jones was married to Sally Brown on Dec. 1, 1881"; not, "John Jones *married* Sally Brown" on such a date, for (unless they were Quakers) some third person married him to her and her to him. But, in speaking indefinitely of the *fact* of marriage, the active form is a matter of course. "Whom did John Jones marry?" "He married Sally Brown." "John Jones, when he had sown his wild oats, married [married himself, as the French say] and settled down." *Got married* is a vulgarism.

**May.** In the sense of *can*, *may*, in a negative clause, has become obsolete. "Though we *may* say a horse, we *may* not say a ox." The first *may* here is permissible; not so, however, the second, which should be *can*.

**Meat.** At table, we ask for and offer beef, mutton, veal, steak, turkey, duck, etc., and do not ask for nor offer *meat*, which, to say the least, is inelegant. "Will you have [not, take] another piece of *beef* [not, of *the* beef]?" not, "Will you have another piece of *meat?*"

**Memorandum.** The plural is *memoranda*, except when the singular means a book; then the plural is *memorandums*.

**Mere.** This word is not unfrequently misplaced, and sometimes, as in the following sentence, in consequence of being misplaced, it is changed to an adverb: "It is true of men as of God, that words *merely* meet with no response." What the writer evidently intended to say is, that *mere* words meet with no response.

**Metaphor.** An *implied* comparison is called a metaphor; it is a more terse form of expression than the simile. Take, for example, this sentence from Spenser's "Philosophy of Style": "As, in passing through the crystal, beams of white light are decomposed into the colors of the rainbow; so, in traversing the soul of the poet, the colorless rays of truth are transformed into brightly-tinted poetry." Expressed in metaphors, this becomes: "The white light of truth, in traversing the many-sided, transparent soul of the poet, is refracted into iris-hued poetry."

Worcester's definition of a *metaphor* is: "A figure of speech founded on the resemblance which one object is supposed to bear, in some respect, to another, or a figure by which a word is transferred from a subject to which it properly belongs to another, in such a manner that a *comparison is implied, though not formally expressed;* a comparison or simile comprised in a word; as, 'Thy word is a *lamp* to my feet.'" A *metaphor* differs from a *simile* in being expressed without any sign of comparison; thus, "the *silver* moon" is a *metaphor;* "the moon is bright as silver" is a simile. Examples:

"But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill."

"Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased—
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow?"

"At length Erasmus
Stemmed the wild torrent of a barbarous age,
And drove those holy Vandals off the stage."

"Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent."

**Metonymy.** The rhetorical figure that puts the effect for the cause, the cause for the effect, the container for the thing contained, the sign, or symbol, for the thing signified, or the instrument for the agent, is called *metonymy*.

"One very common species of *metonymy* is, when the badge is put for the office. Thus we say the *miter* for the priesthood; the *crown* for royalty; for military occupation we say the *sword*; and for the literary professions, those especially of theology, law, and physic, the common expression is the *gown*."—Campbell.

Dr. Quackenbos, in his "Course of Composition and Rhetoric," says: "*Metonymy* is the exchange of names between things related. It is founded, not on resemblance, but on the relation of, 1. Cause and effect; as, 'They have *Moses* and *the prophets*,' i. e., their writings; '*Gray hairs* should be respected,' i. e., *old age*. 2. Progenitor and posterity; as, 'Hear, O Israel!' i. e., *descendants of Israel*. 3. Subject and attribute; as, '*Youth* and *beauty* shall be laid in dust,' i. e., *the young* and *beautiful*. 4. Place and inhabitant; as, 'What *land* is so barbarous as to allow this injustice?' i. e., what *people*. 5. Container and thing contained; as, '**Our** *ships* next opened fire,' i. e., our *sailors*. 6. Sign and thing signified; as, 'The *scepter* shall not depart from Judah,' i. e., *kingly* power. 7. Material and thing made of it; as, 'His *steel* gleamed on high,' i. e., his *sword*."

"Petitions having proved unsuccessful, it was determined to approach the throne more boldly."

**Midst, The.** See IN OUR MIDST.

**Mind—Capricious.** "Lord Salisbury's *mind* is *capricious*."—"Tribune," April 3, 1881. See EQUANIMITY OF MIND.

**Misplaced Clauses.** In writing and speaking, it is as important to give each clause its proper place as it is to place the words properly. The following are a few instances of misplaced clauses and adjuncts: "All these circumstances brought close to us a state of things which we never thought to have witnessed [*to witness*] in peaceful England. *In the sister island, indeed, we had read of such horrors*, but now they were brought home to our very household hearth."—Swift. Better: "We had read, indeed, of such horrors occurring in the sister island," etc.

"The savage people in many places in America, except the government of families, have no government at all, and live at this day in that savage manner as I have said before."—Hobbes. Better: "The savage people . . . in America have no government at all, except the government of families," etc.

"I shall have a comedy for you, in a season or two at farthest, that I believe will be worth your acceptance."—Goldsmith. Bettered: "In a season or two at farthest, I shall have a comedy for you that I believe will be worth your acceptance."

Among the following examples of the wrong placing of words and clauses, there are some that are as amusing as they are instructive: "This orthography is regarded as normal *in England*." What the writer intended was, "in England *as normal*"—a very different thought. "The Normal School is a commodious building capable of accommodating three hundred students four stories high." "HOUSEKEEPER.—A highly respectable middle-aged Person who has been

filling the above Situation with a gentleman for upwards of eleven years and who is now deceased is anxious to meet a similar one." "To PIANO-FORTE MAKERS.—A lady keeping a first-class school requiring a good piano, is desirous of receiving a daughter of the above in exchange for the same." "The Moor, seizing a bolster boiling over with rage and jealousy, smothers her." "The Dying Zouave the most wonderful mechanical representation ever seen of the last breath of life being shot in the breast and life's blood leaving the wound." "Mr. T—— presents his compliments to Mr. H——, and I have got a hat that is not his, and, if he have a hat that is not yours, no doubt they are the expectant ones." See ONLY.

**Misplaced Words.** "Of all the faults to be found in writing," says Cobbett, "this is one of the most common, and perhaps it leads to the greatest number of misconceptions. All the words may be the proper words to be used upon the occasion, and yet, by a *misplacing* of a part of them, the meaning may be wholly destroyed; and even made to be the contrary of what it ought to be."

"I asked the question with no other intention than to set the gentleman free from the necessity of silence, and to give him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite assembly from which, *however uneasy*, he could not then *escape*, *by a kind introduction* of the only subject on which I believed him to be able to speak with propriety." —Dr. Johnson.

"This," says Cobbett, "is a very bad sentence altogether. '*However uneasy*' applies to *assembly* and not to *gentleman*. Only observe how easily this might have been avoided. 'From which *he*, *however uneasy*, could not then escape.' After this we have, '*he* could not then *escape*, *by a kind introduction*.' We know what is *meant*; but the

Doctor, with all his *commas*, leaves the sentence confused. Let us see whether we can not make it clear. 'I asked the question with no other intention than, by a kind introduction of the only subject on which I believed him to be able to speak with propriety, to set the gentleman free from the necessity of silence, and to give him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite assembly from which he, however uneasy, could not then escape.'"

"Reason is the glory of human nature, and one of the chief eminences whereby we are raised above our fellow-creatures, the brutes, *in this lower world*."—Doctor Watts' "Logic."

"I have before showed an error," Cobbett remarks, "in the *first* sentence of Doctor Watts' work. This is the *second* sentence. The words *in this lower world* are not words *misplaced* only; they are wholly *unnecessary*, and they do great harm; for they do these two things: first, they imply *that there are brutes in the higher world;* and, second, they excite a doubt *whether we are raised above those brutes.*

"I might greatly extend the number of my extracts from these authors; but here, I trust, are enough. I had noted down about *two hundred errors* in Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets'; but, afterward perceiving that he had revised and corrected 'The Rambler' with *extraordinary care*, I chose to make my extracts from that work rather than from the 'Lives of the Poets.'"

The position of the adverb should be as near as possible to the word it qualifies. Sometimes we place it before the auxiliary and sometimes after it, according to the thought we wish to express. The difference between "The fish should *properly* be broiled" and "The fish should be *properly* broiled" is apparent at a glance. "The colon may be

*properly* used in the following cases": should be, "may *properly* be used." "This mode of expression *rather suits* a familiar than a grave style": should be, "suits a familiar *rather than* a grave style." "It is a frequent error *in the writings even* of some good authors": should be, "in the writings of *even some good* authors." "*Both* the circumstances of contingency and futurity are necessary": should be, "The circumstances of contingency and futurity are *both* necessary." "He has made charges . . . which he has failed *utterly* to sustain."—"New York Tribune." Here it is uncertain at first sight which verb the adverb is intended to qualify; but the nature of the case makes it probable that the writer meant "has utterly failed to sustain."

**Mistaken.** "If I am not *mistaken*, you are in the wrong": say, "If I *mistake not*." "I tell you, you are *mistaken*." Here *mistaken* means, "You are wrong; you do not understand"; but it might be taken to mean, "I *mistake you*." For "you are *mistaken*," say, "you *mistake*." If, as Horace and Professor Davidson aver, usage in language makes right, then the grammarians ought long ago to have invented some theory upon which the locution *you are mistaken* could be defended. Until they do invent such a theory, it will be better to say *you mistake*, *he mistakes*, and so on; or *you are*, or *he is*—as the case may be—*in error*.

**More perfect.** Such expressions as, "the *more* perfect of the two," "the *most* perfect thing of the kind I have ever seen," "the *most* complete cooking-stove ever invented," and the like, can not be defended logically, as nothing can be more perfect than perfection, or more complete than completeness. Still such phrases are, and probably will continue to be, used by good writers.

**Most.** "Everybody abuses this word," says Mr. Gould in his "Good English"; and then, in another paragraph, he adds: "If a man would cross out *most* wherever he can find it in any book in the English language, he would in *al*most every instance improve the style of the book." That this statement may appear within bounds, he gives many examples from good authors, some of which are the following: "a *most* profound silence"; "a *most* just idea"; "a *most* complete orator"; "this was *most* extraordinary"; "an object of *most* perfect esteem"; "a *most* extensive erudition"; "he gave it *most* liberally away"; "it is, *most* assuredly, not because I value his services least"; "would *most* seriously affect us"; "that such a system must *most* widely and *most* powerfully," etc.; "it is *most* effectually nailed to the counter"; "it is *most* undeniable that," etc.

This word is much, and very erroneously, used for *almost*. "He comes here *most* every day." The user of such a sentence as this means to say that he comes *nearly* every day, but he *really says*, if he says anything, that he comes more every day than he does every night. In such sentences *almost*, and not *most*, is the word to use.

**Mutual.** This word is much misused in the phrase "our *mutual* friend." Macaulay says: "*Mutual* friend is a low vulgarism for *common* friend." *Mutual* properly relates to two persons, and implies reciprocity of sentiment—sentiment, be it what it may, received and returned. Thus, we say properly, "John and James have a *mutual* affection, or a *mutual* aversion," i. e., they like or dislike each other; or, "John and James are *mutually* dependent," i. e., they are dependent on each other. In using the word *mutual*, care should be taken not to add the words *for each other* or *on each other*, the thought conveyed by these words being already expressed in the word *mutual*. "Dependent

on each other" is the exact equivalent of "mutually dependent"; hence, saying that John and James are *mutually* dependent *on each other* is as redundant in form as it would be to say that the editors of "The Great Vilifier" are the biggest, greatest mud-slingers in America.

**Myself.** This form of the personal pronoun is properly used in the nominative case only where *increased emphasis* is aimed at.

> "I had as lief not be as live to be
> In awe of such a thing as I *myself*."

"I will do it *myself*," "I saw it *myself*." It is, therefore, incorrect to say, "Mrs. Brown and myself were both very much pleased."

**Name.** This word is sometimes improperly used for *mention;* thus, "I never *named* the matter to any one": should be, "I never *mentioned* the matter to any one."

**Neighborhood.** See VICINITY.

**Neither.** See EITHER.

**Neither—Nor.** "He would *neither* give wine, *nor* oil, *nor* money."—Thackeray. The conjunction should be placed before the excluded object; "neither *give*" implies neither some other *verb*, a meaning not intended. Rearrange thus, taking all the common parts of the contracted sentences together: "He would give *neither* wine, *nor* oil, *nor* money." So, "She can *neither* help her beauty, *nor* her courage, *nor* her cruelty" (Thackeray), should be, "She can help *neither*," etc. "He had *neither* time to intercept *nor* to stop her" (Scott), should be, "He had time *neither* to intercept," etc. "Some *neither* can for wits *nor* critics pass" (Pope), should be, "Some can *neither* for wits *nor* critics pass."

**Never.** Grammarians differ with regard to the correctness of using *never* in such sentences as, "He is in error,

though *never* so wise," "Charm he *never* so wisely." In sentences like these, to say the least, it is better, in common with the great majority of writers, to use *ever*.

**New.** This adjective is often misplaced. "He has a *new* suit of clothes and a *new* pair of gloves." It is not the *suit* and the *pair* that are new, but the *clothes* and the *gloves*.

**Nice.** Archdeacon Hare remarks of the use, or rather misuse, of this word: "That stupid vulgarism by which we use the word *nice* to denote almost every mode of approbation, for almost every variety of quality, and, from sheer poverty of thought, or fear of saying anything definite, wrap up everything indiscriminately in this characterless domino, speaking at the same breath of a *nice* cheese-cake, a *nice* tragedy, a *nice* sermon, a *nice* day, a *nice* country, as if a universal deluge of *niaiserie*—for *nice* seems originally to have been only *niais*—had whelmed the whole island." Nice is as good a word as any other in its place, but its place is not everywhere. We talk very properly about a *nice* distinction, a *nice* discrimination, a *nice* calculation, a *nice* point, and about a person's being *nice*, and over-*nice*, and the like; but we certainly ought not to talk about "Othello's" being a *nice* tragedy, about Salvini's being a *nice* actor, or New York bay's being a *nice* harbor.*

**Nicely.** The very quintessence of popinjay vulgarity is reached when *nicely* is made to do service for *well*, in this wise: "How do you do?" "*Nicely*." "How are you?" "*Nicely*."

**No.** This word of negation is responded to by *nor* in

* The possessive construction here is, in my judgment, not imperatively demanded. There is certainly no lack of authority for putting the three substantives in the accusative. The possessive construction seems to me, however, to be preferable.

sentences like this: "Let your meaning be obscure, and *no* grace of diction *nor* any music of well-turned sentences will make amends."

"Whether he is there or *no*." Supply the ellipsis, and we have, "Whether he is there or *no* there." Clearly, the word to use in sentences like this is not *no*, but *not*. And yet our best writers sometimes inadvertently use *no* with *whether*. Example: "But perhaps some people are quite indifferent *whether* or *no* it is said," etc.—Richard Grant White, in "Words and Their Uses," p. 84. Supply the ellipsis, and we have, "said or *no* said." In a little book entitled "Live and Learn," I find, "No *less* than fifty persons were there; No *fewer*," etc. In correcting one mistake, the writer himself makes one. It should be, "*Not* fewer," etc. If we ask, "There were fifty persons there, were there or were there *not?*" the reply clearly would be, "There were *not* fewer than fifty." "There was *no* one of them who would not have been proud," etc., should be, "There was *not* one of them."

**Not.** The correlative of *not*, when it stands in the first member of a sentence, is *nor* or *neither*. "*Not* for thy ivory *nor* thy gold will I unbind thy chain." "I will *not* do it, *neither* shall you."

The wrong placing of *not* often gives rise to an imperfect negation; thus, "John and James were *not* there," means that John and James were not there *in company*. It does not exclude the presence of one of them. The negative should precede in this ease: "Neither John *nor* James was there." "Our company was *not* present" (as a company, but some of us might have been), should be, "No member of our company was present."

**Not—but only.** "Errors frequently arise in the use of *not*—but *only*, to understand which we must attend to

the force of the whole expression. 'He did *not* pretend to extirpate French music, *but only* to cultivate and civilize it.' Here the *not* is obviously misplaced. 'He pretended, or professed, *not* to extirpate.' "—Bain.

**Notorious.** Though this word can not be properly used in any but a bad sense, we sometimes see it used instead of *noted*, which may be used in either a good or a bad sense. *Notorious* characters are always persons to be shunned, whereas *noted* characters may or may not be persons to be shunned.

"This is the tax a man must pay for his virtues—they hold up a torch to his vices and render those frailties *notorious* in him which would pass without observation in another."—Lacon.

**Novice.** See AMATEUR.

**Number.** It is not an uncommon thing for a pronoun in the plural number to be used in connection with an antecedent in the singular. At present, the following notice may be seen in some of our Broadway omnibuses: "Fifty dollars reward for the conviction of any person caught collecting or keeping fares given to *them* to deposit in the box." Should be, to *him*. "A person may be very near-sighted if *they* can not recognize an acquaintance ten feet off." Should be, if *he*.

The verb *to be* is often used in the singular instead of in the plural; thus, "There *is* several reasons why it would be better": say, *are*. "How many *is* there?" say, *are*. "There *is* four": say, *are*. "*Was* there many?" say, *were*. "No matter how many there *was*": say, *were*.

A verb should agree in number with its subject, and not with its predicate. We say, for example, "Death *is* the wages of sin," and "The wages of sin *are* death."

"When singular nouns connected by *and* are preceded

by *each*, *every*, or *no*, the verb must be singular." We say, for example, "*Each* boy and *each* girl *studies*." "*Every* leaf, and *every* twig, and *every* drop of water *teems* with life." "*No* book and *no* paper *was* arranged."

*Each* being singular, a pronoun or verb to agree with it must also be singular; thus, "Let them depend each on *his* own exertions"; "Each city has *its* peculiar privileges"; "Everybody has a right to look after *his* own interest."

Errors are often the result of not repeating the verb; thus, "Its significance is as varied as the passions": correctly, "as *are* the passions." "The words are as incapable of analysis as the thing signified": correctly, "as *is* the thing signified."

**Observe.** The dictionaries authorize the use of this word as a synonym of *say* and *remark;* as, for example, "What did you *observe?*" for "What did you *say*, or *remark?*" In this sense, however, it is better to leave *observe* to the exclusive use of those who delight in being fine.

**O'clock.** "It is a quarter *to* ten o'clock." What does this statement mean, literally? We *understand* by it that it lacks a quarter of ten, i. e., of being ten; but it does not really mean that. Inasmuch as *to* means toward, it *really* means a quarter after nine. We should say, then, a quarter *of*, which means, literally, a quarter *out of* ten.

**Of all others.** "The vice of covetousness, *of all others*, enters deepest into the soul." This sentence says that covetousness is one of the *other* vices. A thing can not be *another* thing, nor can it be one of a number of *other* things. The sentence should be, "Of all the vices, covetousness enters deepest into the soul"; or, "The vice of covetousness, of all the vices, enters," etc.; or, "The vice of covetousness, *above* all others, enters," etc.

**Of any.** This phrase is often used when *of all* is meant; thus, "This is the largest *of any* I have seen." Should be, "the largest *of all*," etc.

**Off of.** In such sentences as, "Give me a yard *off of* this piece of calico," either the *off* or the *of* is vulgarly superfluous. The sentence would be correct with either one, but not with both of them. "The apples fell *off of* the tree": read, "fell *off* the tree."

**Often.** This adverb is properly compared by changing its termination: often, oftener, oftenest. Why some writers use *more* and *most* to compare it, it is not easy to see; this mode of comparing it is certainly not euphonious.

**Oh—O.** It is only the most careful writers who use these two interjections with proper discrimination. The distinction between them is said to be modern. *Oh* is simply an exclamation, and should always be followed by some mark of punctuation, usually by an exclamation point. "Oh! you are come at last." "Oh, help him, you sweet heavens!" "Oh, woe is me!" "Oh! I die, Horatio." *O*, in addition to being an exclamation, denotes a calling to or adjuration; thus, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth!" "O grave, where is thy victory!" "O heavenly powers, restore him!" "O shame! where is thy blush?"

**Older—Elder.** "He is the *older* man of the two, and the *oldest* in the neighborhood." "He is the *elder* of the two sons, and the *eldest* of the family." "The *elder* son is heir to the estate; he is *older* than his brother by ten years."

**On to.** We get *on* a chair, *on* an omnibus, *on* a stump, and *on* a spree, and not on *to*.

**One.** Certain pronouns of demonstrative signification are called indefinite because they refer to no particular subject. This is one of them. If we were putting a supposition by way of argument or illustration, we might say,

"Suppose *I* were to lose my way in a wood"; or, "Suppose *you* were to lose your way in a wood"; or, "Suppose *one* were to lose *one's* way in a wood." All these forms are used, but, as a rule, the last is to be preferred. The first verges on egotism, and the second makes free with another's person, whereas the third is indifferent. "If *one's* honesty were impeached, what should *one* do?" is more courtly than to take either one's self or the person addressed for the example.

*One* should be followed by *one*, and not by *he*. "The better acquainted *one* is with any kind of rhetorical trick, the less liable *he* is to be misled by it." Should be, "the less liable *one* is to be misled by it."

In the phrase, "any of the little *ones*," *one* is the numeral employed in the manner of a pronoun, by indicating something that has gone before, or, perhaps, has to come after. "I like peaches, but I must have a ripe *one*, or ripe *ones*."

Professor Bain says, in his "Composition Grammar":

"This pronoun continually lands writers in difficulties. English idiom requires that, when the pronoun has to be again referred to, it should be used itself a second time. The correct usage is shown by Pope: '*One* may be ashamed to consume half *one's* days in bringing sense and rhyme together.' It would be against idiom to say 'half *his* days.'

"Still, the repetition of the pronoun is often felt to be heavy, and writers have recourse to various substitutions. Even an ear accustomed to the idiom can scarcely accept with unmixed pleasure this instance from Browning:

"'Alack! *one* lies *oneself*
Even in the stating that *one's* end was truth,
Truth only, if *one* states so much in words.'

"The representative 'I' or 'we' occasionally acts the part of 'one.' The following sentence presents a curious

alternation of 'we' with 'one'—possibly not accidental (George Eliot): 'It's a desperately vexatious thing that, after all *one's* reflections and quiet determinations, *we* should be ruled by moods that *one* can't calculate on beforehand.' By the use of 'we' here, a more pointed reference is suggested, while the vagueness actually remains.

"Fenimore Cooper, like Scott, is not very particular; an example may be quoted: 'Modesty is a poor man's wealth; but, as *we* grow substantial in the world, patroon, *one* can afford to begin to speak truth of *himself* as well as of *his* neighbor.' Were Cooper a careful writer, we might persuade ourselves that he chose 'we' and 'one' with a purpose: 'we' might indicate that the speaker had himself and the patroon directly in his eye, although at the same time he wanted to put it generally; and 'one' might hint that modesty succeeded in getting the better of him. But 'himself' and 'his' would alone show that such speculations are too refined for the occasion.

"The form 'a man,' which was at one time common, seems to be reviving. In 'Adam Bede' we have, '*A man* can never do anything at variance with his own nature.' We might substitute 'one.'

"'Men' was more frequent in good writing formerly than now. 'Neither do *men* light a candle, and put it under a bushel.' 'Do *men* gather grapes of thorns?' Hume is fond of expressing a general subject by 'men.'

"'Small birds are much more exposed to the cold than large *ones*.' This usage is hardly 'indefinite'; and it needs no further exemplification."

**Only.** This word, when used as an adjective, is more frequently misplaced than any other word in the language. Indeed, I am confident that it is not correctly placed half the time, either in conversation or in writing. Thus, "In

its pages, papers of sterling merit [only] will *only* appear" (Miss Braddon); "Things are getting dull down in Texas; they *only* shot [only] three men down there last week"; "I have *only* got [only] three." *Only* is sometimes improperly used for *except* or *unless;* thus, "The trains will not stop *only* when the bell rings." The meaning here is clearly "*except* when the bell rings."

Dr. Bain, in his "Higher English Grammar," speaking of the order of words, says:

"The word requiring most attention is *only*.

"According to the position of *only*, the same words may be made to express very different meanings.

"'He *only* lived for their sakes.' Here *only* must be held as qualifying '*lived* for their sakes,' the emphasis being on *lived*, the word immediately adjoining. The meaning then is 'he *lived*,' but did not *work*, did not *die*, did not do any other thing for their sakes.

"'He lived *only* for their sakes.' *Only* now qualifies 'for their sakes,' and the sentence means he lived for this one reason, namely, for their sakes, and not for any other reason.

"'He lived for their sakes *only*.' The force of the word when placed at the end is peculiar. Then it often has a diminutive or disparaging signification. 'He lived for their sakes,' and not for any more worthy reason. 'He gave sixpence *only*,' is an insinuation that more was expected.

"By the use of *alone*, instead of *only*, other meanings are expressed. 'He *alone* lived for their sakes'; that is, *he, and nobody else*, did so. 'He lived for their sakes *alone*,' or, 'for the sake of them *alone*'; that is, not for the sake of any other persons. 'It was *alone* by the help of the Confederates that any such design could be carried out.' Better *only*.

"'When men grow virtuous in their old age, they *only* make a sacrifice to God of the devil's leavings.'—Pope. Here *only* is rightly placed. 'Think *only* of the past as its remembrance gives you pleasure,' should be, 'think of the past, *only* as its remembrance,' etc. 'As he did not leave his name, it was *only* known that a gentleman had called on business': it was known *only*. 'I can *only* refute the accusation by laying before you the whole': this would mean, 'the only thing I am able to do is to refute; I may not retaliate, or let it drop, I must *refute* it.' 'The negroes are to appear at church *only* in boots'; that is, when the negroes go to church they are to have no clothing but boots. 'The negroes are to appear *only* at church in boots' might mean that they are not to appear anywhere but at church, whether in boots or out of them. The proper arrangement would be to connect the adverbial adjunct, *in boots*, with its verb, *appear*, and to make *only* qualify *at church* and no more: 'the negroes are to appear in boots *only* at church.'"

It thus appears very plain that we should look well to our *onlys*.

**Ought—Should.** These two words, though they both imply obligation, should not be used indiscriminately. *Ought* is the stronger term; what we *ought* to do, we are morally bound to do. We *ought* to be truthful and honest, and *should* be respectful to our elders and kind to our inferiors.

**Overflown.** *Flown* is the past participle of *to fly*, and *flowed* of *to flow*. As, therefore, a river does not *fly* over its banks, but *flows* over them, we should say of it that it has over*flowed*, and not that it has over*flown*.

**Overly.** This word is now used only by the unschooled.

**Owing.** See DUE.

**Pants.** This abbreviation is not used by those who are careful in the choice of words. The purist does not use the word *pantaloons* even, but *trousers*. *Pants* are worn by *gents* who eat *lunches* and *open* wine, and *trousers* are worn by *gentlemen* who eat *luncheons* and *order* wine.

**Paraphernalia.** This is a law term. In Roman law, it meant the goods which a woman brought to her husband besides her dowry. In English law, it means the goods which a woman is allowed to have after the death of her husband, besides her dower, consisting of her apparel and ornaments suitable to her rank. When used in speaking of the affairs of every-day life, it is generally misused.

**Parlor.** This word, in the sense of *drawing-room*, according to Dr. Hall, except in the United States and some of the English colonies, is obsolete.

**Partake.** This is a very fine word to use for *eat*; just the word for young women who hobble on French heels.

**Partially—Partly.** "It is only *partially* done." This use of the adverb *partially* is sanctioned by high authority, but that does not make it correct. A thing done in part is *partly*, not *partially*, done.

**Participles.** When the present participle is used substantively, in sentences like the following, it is preceded by the definite article and followed by the preposition *of*. The omitting of the preposition is a common error. Thus, "Or, it is *the drawing* a conclusion which was before either unknown or dark," should be, "the drawing *of* a conclusion." "Prompted by the most extreme vanity, he persisted in the writing bad verses," should be, "in writing bad verses," or "in the writing *of* bad verses." "There is a misuse of the article *a* which is very common. It is

the using it before the word *most*."—Moon. Most writers would have said "the using *of* it." Mr. Moon argues for his construction.

**Particles.** "Nothing but study of the best writers and practice in composition will enable us to decide what are the prepositions and conjunctions that ought to go with certain verbs. The following examples illustrate some common blunders:

"'It was characterized *with* eloquence': read, 'by.'

"'A testimonial *of* the merits of his grammar': read, 'to.'

"'It was an example of the love *to form* comparisons': read, 'of forming.'

"'Repetition is always to be preferred *before* obscurity': read, 'to.'

"'He made an effort *for meeting* them': read, 'to meet.'

"'They have no *other* object *but* to come': read, 'other object than,' or omit 'other.'

"Two verbs are not unfrequently followed by a single preposition, which accords with one only; e. g., 'This duty *is repeated* and inculcated *upon* the reader.' 'Repeat *upon*' is nonsense; we must read 'is repeated *to* and inculcated upon.'"—Nichol's "English Composition," p. 39. We often see *for* used with the substantive *sympathy*; the best practice, however, uses *with*; thus, "Words can not express the deep sympathy I feel *with* you."—Queen Victoria.

**Party.** This is a very good word in its place, but it is very much out of its place when used—as it often is by the vulgar—where good taste would use the word *person*.

**Patronize.** This word and its derivatives would be

much less used by the American tradesman than they are, if he were better acquainted with their true meaning. Then he would solicit his neighbors' *custom*, not their *patronage*. A man can have no *patrons* without incurring obligations—without becoming a *protégé*; while a man may have customers innumerable, and, instead of placing himself under obligations to them, he may place them under obligations to him. Princes are the *patrons* of those tradesmen whom they allow to call themselves their purveyors; as, "John Smith, Haberdasher to H. R. H. the Prince of Wales." Here the Prince *patronizes* John Smith.

**Pell-mell.** This adverb means mixed or mingled together; as, "Men, horses, chariots, crowded *pell-mell*." It can not properly be applied to an individual. To say, for example, "He rushed pell-mell down the stairs," is as incorrect as it would be to say, "He rushed down the stairs *mixed together*."

**Per.** This Latin preposition is a good deal used in English, as, for example, in such phrases as *per* day, *per* man, *per* pound, *per* ton, and so on. In all such cases it is better to use plain English, and say, *a* day, *a* man, *a* pound, *a* ton, etc. *Per* is correct before Latin nouns only; as, per annum, per diem, per cent., etc.

**Perform.** "She *performs* on the piano beautifully." In how much better taste it is to say simply, "She *plays* the piano well," or, more superlatively, "exceedingly well," or "admirably"! If we talk about *performing* on musical instruments, to be consistent, we should call those who *perform*, piano-performers, cornet-performers, violin-performers, and so on.

**Perpetually.** This word is sometimes misused for *continually*. Dr. William Mathews, in his "Words, their Use and Abuse," says: "The Irish are *perpetually* using

*shall* for *will*." *Perpetual* means never ceasing, continuing without intermission, uninterrupted; while *continual* means that which is constantly renewed and recurring with perhaps frequent stops and interruptions. As the Irish do something *besides* misuse *shall*, the Doctor should have said that they *continually* use *shall* for *will*. I might perhaps venture to intimate that *perpetually* is likewise misused in the following sentence, which I copy from the "London Queen," if I were not conscious that the monster who can write and print such a sentence would not hesitate to cable a thunderbolt at an offender on the slightest provocation. Judge, if my fears are groundless: "But some few people contract the ugly habit of making use of these expressions unconsciously and continuously, *perpetually* interlarding their conversation with them."

**Person.** See PARTY; also, INDIVIDUAL.

**Personalty.** This word does not, as some persons think, mean the articles worn on one's person. It is properly a law term, and means *personal property*. "There is but one case on record of a peer of England leaving over $7,500,000 personalty."

**Personification.** That rhetorical figure which attributes sex, life, or action to inanimate objects, or ascribes to objects and brutes the acts and qualities of rational beings, is called *personification* or *prosopopœia*.

"The mountains *sing together*, the hills rejoice and *clap their hands*." "The worm, *aware* of his intent, *harangued* him thus."

"See, *Winter* comes to *rule* the varied year,
*Sullen* and *sad* with all his rising train."—Thomson.

"So saying, her rash hand, in evil hour,
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate!
*Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,*

*Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,*
*That all was lost.*"—Milton.

"War and Love are strange compeers.
War sheds blood, and Love sheds tears;
War has swords, and Love has darts;
War breaks heads, and Love breaks hearts."

"Levity is often less foolish and gravity less wise than each of them appears."

"The English language, by reserving the distinction of gender for living beings that have sex, gives especial scope for personification. The highest form of personification should be used seldom, and only when justified by the presence of strong feeling."—Bain.

"Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have ofttimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more."—Cowper.

**Phenomenon.** Plural, *phenomena*.

**Plead.** The imperfect tense and the perfect participle of the verb *to plead* are both *pleaded* and not *plead*. "He *pleaded* not guilty." "You should have *pleaded* your cause with more fervor."

**Plenty.** In Worcester's Dictionary we find the following note: "*Plenty* is much used colloquially as an adjective, in the sense of *plentiful*, both in this country and in England; and this use is supported by respectable authorities, though it is condemned by various critics. Johnson says: 'It is used barbarously, I think, for *plentiful*'; and Dr. Campbell, in his 'Philosophy of Rhetoric,' says: '*Plenty* for *plentiful* appears to me so gross a vulgarism that I should not have thought it worthy of a place here if I had

not sometimes found it in works of considerable merit.'" We should say, then, that money is *plentiful*, and not that it is *plenty*.

**Pleonasm.** Redundancy or pleonasm is the use of more words than are necessary to express the thought clearly. "They returned *back again* to the *same* city *from* whence they came *forth*": the five words in italics are *redundant* or *pleonastic*. "The different departments of science and of art *mutually* reflect light *on each other*": either of the expressions in italics embodies the whole idea. "The *universal* opinion of *all* men" is a pleonastic expression often heard. "I wrote you *a letter* yesterday": here *a letter* is redundant.

Redundancy is *sometimes* permissible for the surer conveyance of meaning, for emphasis, and in the language of poetic embellishment.

**Polite.** This word is much used by persons of doubtful culture, where those of the better sort use the word *kind*. We accept *kind*, not *polite* invitations; and, when any one has been obliging, we tell him that he has been *kind*; and, when an interviewing reporter tells us of his having met with a *polite* reception, we may be sure that the person by whom he has been received deserves well for his considerate kindness. "I thank you and Mrs. Pope for my *kind* reception."—Atterbury.

**Portion.** This word is often incorrectly used for *part*. A *portion* is properly a part assigned, allotted, set aside for a special purpose; a share, a division. The verb *to portion* means to divide, to parcel, to endow. We ask, therefore, "In what *part* [not, in what *portion*] of the country, state, county, town, or street do you live?"—or, if we prefer grandiloquence to correctness, *reside*. In the sentence, "A large *portion* of the land is untilled," the right word

would be either *part* or *proportion*, according to the intention of the writer.

**Posted.** A word very much and very inelegantly used for *informed*. Such expressions as, "I will *post* you," "I must *post* myself up," "If I had been better *posted*," and the like, are, at the best, but one remove from slang.

**Predicate.** This word is often very incorrectly used in the sense of *to base;* as, "He *predicates* his opinion on insufficient data." Then we sometimes hear people talk about predicating an action upon certain information or upon somebody's statement. To predicate means primarily *to speak before*, and has come to be properly used in the sense of *assumed* or believed to be the consequence of. Examples: "Contentment is *predicated* of virtue"; "Good health may be *predicated* of a good constitution." He who is not very sure that he uses the word correctly would do better not to use it at all.

**Prejudice—Prepossess.** Both these words mean, to incline in one direction or the other for some reason not founded in justice; but by common consent *prejudice* has come to be used in an unfavorable sense, and *prepossess* in a favorable one. Thus, we say, "He is *prejudiced* against him," and "He is *prepossessed* in his favor." We sometimes hear the expression, "He is *prejudiced* in his favor," but this can not be accounted a good use of the word.

**Prepositions.** The errors made in the use of the prepositions are very numerous. "The indolent child is one who [that?] has a strong aversion *from* action of any sort." —Graham's "English Synonymes," p. 236. The prevailing and best modern usage is in favor of *to* instead of *from* after *averse* and *aversion*, and before the object. "Clearness . . . enables the reader to see thoughts without notic-

ing the language *with* which they are clothed."—Townsend's "Art of Speech." We clothe thoughts *in* language. "Shakespeare . . . and the Bible are . . . models *for* the English-speaking tongue."—Ibid. If this means models of English, then it should be *of;* but if it means models for English organs of speech to practice on, then it should be *for;* or if it means models to model English tongues after, then also it should be *for*. "If the resemblance is too faint, the mind is fatigued *while* attempting to trace the analogies." "Aristotle is in error *while* thus describing governments."—Ibid. Here we have two examples, not of the misuse of the preposition, but of the erroneous use of the adverb *while* instead of the preposition *in*. "For my part I can not think that Shelley's poetry, except *by* snatches and fragments, has the value of the good work of Wordsworth or Byron."—Matthew Arnold. Should be, "except *in* snatches." "Taxes with us are collected nearly [almost] solely *from* real and personal estate."—"Appletons' Journal." Taxes are levied *on* estates and collected *from* the owners.

"If I am not commended *for* the beauty of my works, I may hope to be pardoned for their brevity." Cobbett comments on this sentence as follows: "We may commend him *for* the beauty of his works, and we may *pardon* him *for* their brevity, if we deem the brevity *a fault;* but this is not what he means. He means that, at any rate, he shall have the *merit* of brevity. 'If I am not commended for the beauty of my works, I may hope to be pardoned *on account of* their brevity.' This is what the Doctor meant; but this would have marred a little the antithesis: it would have unsettled a little of the balance of that *seesaw* in which Dr. Johnson so much delighted, and which, falling into the hands of novel-writers and of members of Parlia-

ment, has, by moving unencumbered with any of the Doctor's reason or sense, lulled so many thousands asleep! Dr. Johnson created a race of writers and speakers. 'Mr. Speaker, that the state of the nation is very critical, all men will allow; but that it is wholly desperate, few will believe.' When you hear or see a sentence like this, be sure that the person who speaks or writes it has been reading Dr. Johnson, or some of his imitators. But, observe, these imitators go no further than the frame of the sentences. They, in general, take care not to imitate the Doctor in knowledge and reasoning."

The rhetoricians would have us avoid such forms of expression as, "The boy went *to* and asked the advice *of* his teacher"; "I called *on* and had a conversation *with* my brother."

Very often the preposition is not repeated in a sentence, when it should be. We say properly, "He comes from Ohio or *from* Indiana"; or, "He comes *either* from Ohio or Indiana."

**Prepossess.** See PREJUDICE.

**Present—Introduce.** Few errors are more common, especially among those who are always straining to be fine, than that of using *present*, in the social world, instead of *introduce*. *Present* means to place in the presence of a superior; *introduce*, to bring to be acquainted. A person is presented at court, and on an official occasion to our President; but persons who are unknown to each other are *introduced* by a common acquaintance. And in these introductions, it is the younger who is introduced to the older; the lower to the higher in place or social position; the gentleman to the lady. A lady should say, as a rule, that Mr. Blank was introduced to her, not that she was introduced to Mr. Blank.

**Presumptive.** This word is sometimes misused by the careless for *presumptuous.*

**Preventive.** A useless and unwarranted syllable is sometimes added to this word—*preventative.*

**Previous.** This adjective is much used in an adverbial sense; thus, "*Previous* to my return," etc. Until *previous* is recognized as an adverb, if we would speak grammatically, we must say, "*Previously* to my return." "*Previously* to my leaving England, I called on his lordship."

**Procure.** This is a word much used by people who strive to be fine. "Where did you *get* it?" with them is, "Where did you *procure* it?"

**Profanity.** The extent to which some men habitually interlard their talk with oaths is disgusting even to many who, on occasion, do not themselves hesitate to give expression to their feelings in oaths portly and unctuous. If these fellows could be made to know how offensive to decency they make themselves, they would, perhaps, be less profane.

**Promise.** This word is sometimes very improperly used for *assure;* thus, "I *promise* you I was very much astonished."

**Pronouns of the First Person.** "The ordinary uses of 'I' and 'we,' as the singular and plural pronouns of the first person, would appear to be above all ambiguity, uncertainty, or dispute. Yet when we consider the force of the plural 'we,' we are met with a contradiction; for, as a rule, only one person can speak at the same time to the same audience. It is only by some exceptional arrangement, or some latitude or license of expression, that several persons can be conjoint speakers. For example, a plurality may sing together in chorus, and may join in the responses at church, or in the simultaneous repetition of the Lord's

Prayer or the Creed. Again, one person may be the authorized spokesman in delivering a judgment or opinion held by a number of persons in common. Finally, in written compositions, the 'we' is not unsuitable, because a plurality of persons may append their names to a document.

"A speaker using 'we' may speak for himself and one or more others; commonly he stands forward as the representative of a class, more or less comprehensive. 'As soon as my companion and I had entered the field, *we* saw a man coming toward *us*'; '*we* like *our* new curate'; 'you do *us* poets the greatest injustice'; '*we* must see to the efficiency of *our* forces.' The widest use of the pronoun will be mentioned presently.

"'We' is used for 'I' in the decrees of persons in authority; as when King Lear says:

'Know that *we* have divided
In three *our* kingdom.'

By the fiction of plurality a veil of modesty is thrown over the assumption of vast superiority over human beings generally. Or, 'we' may be regarded as an official form whereby the speaker personally is magnified or enabled to rise to the dignity of the occasion.

"The editorial 'we' is to be understood on the same principle. An author using 'we' appears as if he were not alone, but sharing with other persons the responsibility of his views.

"This representative position is at its utmost stretch in the practice of using 'we' for human beings generally; as in discoursing on the laws of human nature. The preacher, the novelist, or the philosopher, in dwelling upon the peculiarity of our common constitution, being himself an example of what he is speaking of, associates the rest of mankind with him, and speaks collectively by means of

'we.' '*We* are weak and fallible'; '*we* are of yesterday'; '*we* are doomed to dissolution.' 'Here have *we* no continuing city, but *we* seek one to come.'

"It is not unfrequent to have in one sentence, or in close proximity, both the editorial and the representative meaning, the effect being ambiguity and confusion. 'Let *us* [the author] now consider why *we* [humanity generally] overrate distant good.' In such a case the author should fall back upon the singular for himself—'*I* will now consider—.' '*We* [speaker] think *we* [himself and hearers together] should come to the conclusion.' Say, either '*I* think,' or '*you* would.'

"The following extract from Butler exemplifies a similar confusion: 'Suppose *we* [representative] are capable of happiness and of misery in degrees equally intense and extreme, yet *we* [rep.] are capable of the latter for a much longer time, beyond all comparison. *We* [change of subject to a limited class] see men in the tortures of pain—. Such is *our* [back to representative] make that anything may become the instrument of pain and sorrow to *us*.' The 'we' at the commencement of the second sentence—'*We* see men in the tortures'—could be advantageously changed to 'you,' or the passive construction could be substituted; the remaining *we*'s would then be consistently representative.

"From the greater emphasis of singularity, energetic speakers and writers sometimes use 'I' as representative of mankind at large. Thus: 'The current impressions received through the senses are not voluntary in origin. What *I* see in walking is seen because *I* have an organ of vision.' The question of general moral obligation is forcibly stated by Paley in the individual form, 'Why am *I* obliged to keep my word?' It is sometimes well to confine the atten-

tion of the hearer or reader to his own relation to the matter under consideration, more especially in difficult or non-popular argument or exposition. The speaker, by using 'I,' does the action himself, or makes himself the example, the hearer being expected to put himself in the same position."—Bain's "Composition Grammar."

**Pronouns of the Second Person.** "Anomalous usages have sprung up in connection with these pronouns. The plural form has almost wholly superseded the singular; a usage more than five centuries old.*

"The motive is courtesy. The singling out of one person for address is supposed to be a liberty or an excess of familiarity; and the effect is softened or diluted by the fiction of taking in others. If our address is uncomplimentary, the sting is lessened by the plural form; and if the reverse, the shock to modesty is not so great. This is a refinement that was unknown to the ancient languages. The orators of Greece delighted in the strong, pointed, personal appeal implied in the singular 'thou.' In modern German, 'thou' (*du*) is the address of familiarity and intimacy; while the ordinary pronoun is the curiously indirect 'they' (*Sie*). On solemn occasions, we may revert to 'thou.' Cato, in his meditative soliloquy on reading Plato's views on the immortality of the soul before killing himself, says: 'Plato, *thou* reasonest well.' So in the Commandments, 'thou' addresses to each individual an unavoidable appeal: '*Thou* shalt not——.' But our ordinary means of making the personal appeal is, 'you, *sir*,' 'you, *madam*,' 'my *Lord*, you——,' etc.; we reserve 'thou' for the special case of addressing the Deity. The application of the motive of courtesy is here reversed; it would be

* "The use of the plural for the singular was established as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century."—Morris, p. 118, § 153.

irreverent to merge this vast personality in a promiscuous assemblage.

"'You' is not unfrequently employed, like 'we,' as a representative pronoun. The action is represented with great vividness, when the person or persons addressed may be put forward as the performers: 'There is such an echo among the old ruins and vaults, that if *you* stamp a little louder than ordinary, *you* hear the sound repeated'; 'Some practice is required to see these animals in the thick forest, even when *you* hear them close by *you*.'

"There should not be a mixture of 'thou' and 'you' in the same passage. Thus, Thackeray (Adventures of Philip): 'So, as *thy* sun rises, friend, over the humble house-tops round about *your* home, shall *you* wake many and many a day to duty and labor.' So, Cooper (Water-Witch): '*Thou* hast both master and mistress? *You* have told us of the latter, but we would know something of the former. Who is *thy* master?' Shakespeare, Scott, and others might also be quoted.

"'Ye' and 'you' were at one time strictly distinguished as different cases; 'ye' was nominative, 'you' objective (dative or accusative). But the Elizabethan dramatists confounded the forms irredecmably; and 'you' has gradually ousted 'ye' from ordinary use. 'Ye' is restricted to the expression of strong feeling, and in this employment occurs chiefly in the poets."—Bain's "Composition Grammar."

**Proof.** This word is much and very improperly used for *evidence*, which is only the medium of *proof*, *proof* being the effect of *evidence*. "What *evidence* have you to offer in *proof* of the truth of your statement?" See also EVIDENCE.

**Propose—Purpose.** Writers and speakers often fail to discriminate properly between the respective meanings of these two verbs. *Propose*, correctly used, means, to put

forward or to offer for *the consideration of others;* hence, *a proposal* is a scheme or design offered for acceptance or consideration, a proposition. *Purpose* means, to intend, to design, to resolve; hence, *a purpose* is an intention, an aim, that which one sets *before one's self.* Examples: "What do you *purpose* doing in the matter?" "What do you *propose* that we shall do in the matter?" "I will do" means "I *purpose* doing, or to do." "I *purpose* to write a history of England from the accession of King James the Second down to a time which is within the memory of men still living."—Macaulay. It will be observed that Macaulay says, "I purpose *to write*," and not, "I purpose *writing*," using the verb in the infinitive rather than in the participial form. "On which he *purposed* to mount one of his little guns." See INFINITIVE.

**Proposition.** This word is often used when *proposal* would be better, for the reason that *proposal* has but one meaning, and is shorter by one syllable. "He demonstrated the *proposition* of Euclid, and rejected the *proposal* of his friend."

**Prosaist.** Dr. Hall is of opinion that this is a word we shall do well to encourage. It is used by good writers.

**Proven.** This form for the past participle of the verb *to prove* is said to be a Scotticism. It is not used by careful writers and speakers. The correct form is *proved.*

**Providing.** The present participle of the verb *to provide* is sometimes vulgarly used for the conjunction *provided,* as in this sentence from the "London Queen": "Society may be congratulated, . . . *providing* that," etc.

**Provoke.** See AGGRAVATE.

**Punctuation.** The importance of punctuation can not be overestimated; it not only helps to make plain the meaning of what one writes, but it may prevent one's being mis-

construed. Though no two writers could be found who punctuate just alike, still in the main those who pay attention to the art put in their stops in essentially the same manner. The difference that punctuation may make in the meaning of language is well illustrated by the following anecdote:

At Ramessa there lived a benevolent and hospitable prior, who caused these lines to be painted over his door:

"Be open evermore,
O thou my door!
To none be shut—to honest or to poor!"

In time the good prior was succeeded by a man as selfish as his predecessor was generous. The lines over the door of the priory were allowed to remain; one stop, however, was altered, which made them read thus:

"Be open evermore,
O thou my door!
To none—be shut to honest or to poor!"

He punctuates best who makes his punctuation contribute most to the clear expression of his thought; and that construction is best that has least need of being punctuated.

THE COMMA.—The chief difference in the punctuation of different writers is usually in their use of the comma, in regard to which there is a good deal of latitude; much is left to individual taste. Nowadays the best practice uses it sparingly. An idea of the extent to which opinions differ with regard to the use of the comma may be formed from the following excerpt from a paper prepared for private use:

"In the following examples, gathered from various sources—chiefly from standard books—the superfluous commas are inclosed in parentheses:

"1. 'It remains(,) perhaps(,) to be said(,) that, if any lesson at all(,) as to these delicate matters(,) is needed(,) in this period, it is not so much a lesson,' etc. 2. 'The obedience is not due to the power of a right authority, but to the spirit of fear, and(,) therefore(,) is(,) in reality(,) no obedience at all.' 3. 'The patriot disturbances in Canada . . . awakened deep interest among the people of the United States(,) who lived adjacent to the frontier.' 4. 'Observers(,) who have recently investigated this point(,) do not all agree,' etc. 5. 'The wind did(,) in an instant(,) what man and steam together had failed to do in hours.' 6. 'All the cabin passengers(,) situated beyond the center of the boat(,) were saved.' 7. 'No other writer has depicted(,) with so much art or so much accuracy(,) the habits, the manners,' etc. 8. 'If it shall give satisfaction to those who have(,) in any way(,) befriended it, the author will feel,' etc. 9. 'Formed(,) or consisting of(,) clay.' 10. 'The subject [witchcraft] grew interesting; and(,) to examine Sarah Cloyce and Elizabeth Proctor, the deputy-governor(,) and five other magistrates(,) went to Salem.' 11. 'The Lusitanians(,) who had not left their home(,) rose as a man,' etc. 12. 'Vague reports . . . had preceded him to Washington, and his Mississippi friends(,) who chanced to be at the capital(,) were not backward to make their boast of him.' 13. 'Our faith has acquired a new vigor(,) and a clearer vision.' 14. 'In 1819(,) he removed to Cambridge.' 15. 'Doré was born at Strasburg(,) in 1832, and labors,' etc. 16. 'We should never apply dry compresses, charpie, or wadding(,) to the wound.' 17. '—to stand idle, to look, act, or think(,) in a leisurely way.' 18. '—portraits taken from the farmers, schoolmasters, and peasantry(,) of the neighborhood.' 19. '—gladly welcomed painters of Flanders, Holland, and Spain(,) to their shores.'

"In all these cases, the clauses between or following the inclosed commas are so closely connected grammatically with the immediately preceding words or phrases, that they should be read without a perceptible pause, or with only a slight one for breath, without change of voice. Some of the commas would grossly pervert the meaning if strictly construed. Thus, from No. 3 it would appear that the people of the United States in general lived adjacent to the frontier; from No. 4, that all observers have recently investigated the point in question; from No. 6, that all the cabin passengers were so situated that they were saved, whereas it is meant that only a certain small proportion of them were saved; from No. 10 (Bancroft), that somebody whose name is accidentally omitted went to Salem 'to examine Sarah Cloyce and Elizabeth Proctor, the deputy-governor, and five other magistrates'; from No. 11, that none of the Lusitanians had left their home, whereas it was the slaughter by the Romans of a great number of them who *had* left their home that caused the rising.

"Commas are frequently omitted, and in certain positions very generally, where the sense and correct reading require a pause. In the following examples, such commas, omitted in the works from which they were taken, are inclosed in brackets:

"1. 'The modes of thought[,] and the types of character which those modes produce[,] are essentially and universally transformed.' 2. 'Taken by itself[,] this doctrine could have no effect whatever; indeed[,] it would amount to nothing but a verbal proposition.' 3. 'Far below[,] the little stream of the Oder foamed over the rocks.' 4. 'When the day returned[,] the professor, the artist[,] and I rowed to within a hundred yards of the shore.' 5. 'Proceeding into the interior of India[,] they passed through Belgaum.'

6. 'If Loring is defeated in the Sixth District[,] it can be borne.'

"In No. 3, the reader naturally enunciates 'the little stream of the Oder' as in the objective case after 'below'; but there he comes to a predicate which compels him to go back and read differently. In No. 4, it appears that 'the day returned the professor,' and then 'the artist and I rowed,' etc."

All clauses should generally be isolated by commas; where, however, the connection is very close or the clause is very short, no point may be necessary. "But his pride is greater than his ignorance, and what he wants in knowledge he supplies by sufficiency." "A man of polite imagination can converse with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a statue." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." "The prince, his father being dead, succeeded." "To confess the truth, I was much at fault." "As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee." "Where the bee sucks, there suck I." "His father dying, he succeeded to the estate." "The little that is known, and the circumstance that little is known, must be considered as honorable to him."

The comma is used before and after a phrase when coordinating and not restrictive. "The jury, having retired for half an hour, brought in a verdict." "The stranger, unwilling to obtrude himself on our notice, left in the morning." "Rome, the city of the Emperors, became the city of the Popes." "His stories, which made everybody laugh, were often made to order." "He did not come, which I greatly regret." "The younger, who was yet a boy, had nothing striking in his appearance." "They passed the cup to the stranger, who drank heartily." "Peace at any price, which these orators seem to advo-

cate, means war at any cost." "Sailors, who are generally superstitious, say it is unlucky to embark on Friday."

Adverbs and short phrases, *when they break the connection*, should be between commas. Some of the most common words and phrases so used are the following: Also, too, there, indeed, perhaps, surely, moreover, likewise, however, finally, namely, therefore, apparently, meanwhile, consequently, unquestionably, accordingly, notwithstanding, in truth, in fact, in short, in general, in reality, no doubt, of course, as it were, at all events, to be brief, to be sure, now and then, on the contrary, in a word, by chance, in that case, in the mean time, for the most part. "History, in a word, is replete with moral lessons." "As an orator, however, he was not great." "There is, remember, a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue." "Our civilization, therefore, is not an unmixed good." "This, I grant you, is not of great importance."

If, however, the adverb does not break the connection, but readily coalesces with the rest of the sentence, the commas are omitted. "Morning will come at last, however dark the night may be." "We then proceeded on our way." "Our civilization is therefore not an unmixed good." "Patience, I say; your mind perhaps may change."

Adverbial phrases and clauses beginning a sentence are set off by commas. "In truth, I could not tell." "To sum up, the matter is this." "Everything being ready, they set out." "By looking a little deeper, the reason will be found." "Finally, let me sum up the argument." "If the premises were admitted, I should deny the conclusion." "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Words used in apposition should be isolated by com-

mas. "Newton, the great mathematician, was very modest." "And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers." In such sentences, however, as, "The mathematician Newton was very modest," and "The Emperor Napoleon was a great soldier," commas are not used.

The name or designation of a person addressed is isolated by commas. "It touches you, my lord, as well as me." "John, come here." "Mr. President, my object is peace." "Tell me, boy, where do you live?" "Yes, sir, I will do as you say." "Mr. Brown, what is your number?"

Pairs of words.—"Old and young, rich and poor, wise and foolish, were involved." "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and heart to this vote." "Interest and ambition, honor and shame, friendship and enmity, gratitude and revenge, are the prime movers in public transactions."

A restrictive clause is not separated by a comma from the noun. "Every one must love a boy who [that] is attentive and docile." "He preaches sublimely who [that] lives a holy life." "The things which [that] are seen are temporal." "A king depending on the support of his subjects can not rashly go to war." "The sailor who [that] is not superstitious will embark any day."

The comma is used after adjectives, nouns, and verbs in sentences like the following:

"Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils
Shrunk to this little measure?"

"He fills, he bounds, connects and equals all."

"Who to the enraptured heart, and ear, and eye
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody." *

* "Some writers omit the comma in cases where the conjunction is used. But, as the conjunction is generally employed in such cases for emphasis, commas ought to be used; although, where the words are

"He rewarded his friends, chastised his foes, set Justice on her seat, and made his conquest secure."

The comma is used to separate adjectives in opposition, but closely connected. "Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull." "Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand." "Though black, yet comely; and though rash, benign."

After a nominative, where the verb is understood. "To err is human; to forgive, divine." "A wise man seeks to shine in himself; a fool, in others." "Conversation makes a ready man; writing, an exact man; reading, a full man."

A long subject is often separated from the predicate by a comma. "Any one that refuses to earn an honest livelihood, is not an object of charity." "The circumstance of his being unprepared to adopt immediate and decisive measures, was represented to the Government." "That he had persistently disregarded every warning and persevered in his reckless course, had not yet undermined his credit with his dupes." "That the work of forming and perfecting the character is difficult, is generally allowed."

In a series of adjectives that precede their noun, a comma is placed after each except the last; there usage omits the point. "A beautiful, tall, willowy, sprightly girl." "A quick, brilliant, studious, learned man." *

A comma is placed between short members of com-

very closely connected, or where they constitute a clause in the midst of a long sentence, they may be omitted."—Bigelow's "Handbook of Punctuation."

* "This usage violates one of the fundamental principles of punctuation; it indicates, very improperly, that the noun *man* is more closely connected with *learned* than with the other adjectives. Analogy and perspicuity require a comma after *learned*."—Quackenbos.

pound sentences, connected by *and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *because*, *whereas*, *that* expressing purpose (so that, in order that), and other conjunctions. "Be virtuous, that you may be respected." "Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty." "Man proposes, but God disposes."

A comma must not be placed before *that* except when it is equivalent to *in order that*. "He says that he will be here."

A comma must not be placed before *and* when it connects two words only. "Time and tide wait for no man." "A rich and prosperous people." "Plain and honest truth wants no artificial covering."

A comma is sometimes necessary to prevent ambiguity. "He who pursues pleasure only defeats the object of his creation." Without a comma before or after *only*, the meaning of this sentence is doubtful.

The following sentences present some miscellaneous examples of the use of the comma by writers on punctuation: "Industry, as well as genius, is essential to the production of great works." "Prosperity is secured to a state, not by the acquisition of territory or riches, but by the encouragement of industry." "Your manners are affable, and, for the most part, pleasing." *

"However fairly a bad man may appear to act, we distrust him." "Why, this is rank injustice." "Well, follow the dictates of your inclination." "The comma may be omitted in the case of *too*, *also*, *therefore*, and *perhaps*, when introduced so as not to interfere with the harmonious flow of the period; and, particularly, when the sentence is short." † "Robert Horton, M. D., F. R. S." "To those who labor, sleep is doubly pleasant"; "Sleep

* Many writers would omit the last two commas in this sentence.

† The commas before and after *particularly* are hardly necessary

is doubly pleasant to those who labor." "Those who persevere, succeed." "To be overlooked, slighted, and neglected; to be misunderstood, misrepresented, and slandered; to be trampled under foot by the envious, the ignorant, and the vile; to be crushed by foes, and to be distrusted and betrayed even by friends—such is too often the fate of genius." "She is tall, though not so handsome as her sister." "Verily, verily, I say unto you." "Whatever is, is right." "What is foreordained to be, will be." "The Emperor Augustus was a patron of the fine arts." "Augustus, the Emperor, was a patron of the fine arts." "United, we stand; divided, we fall." "God said, Let there be light." "July 21, 1881." "President Garfield was shot, Saturday morning, July 2, 1881; he died, Monday night, Sept. 19, 1881." "I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, John Jones." "New York, August, 1881." "Room 20, Equitable Building, Broadway, New York."

"*When you are in doubt as to the propriety of inserting commas, omit them;* IT IS BETTER TO HAVE TOO FEW THAN TOO MANY."—Quackenbos.

THE SEMICOLON.—Reasons are preceded by semicolons; "Economy is no disgrace; for it is better to live on a little than to outlive a great deal." Clauses in opposition are separated by a semicolon when the second is introduced by an adversative: "Straws swim at the surface; but pearls lie at the bottom"; "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight." Without the adversative, the colon is to be preferred: "Prosperity showeth vice: adversity, virtue." The great divisions of a sentence must be pointed with a semicolon when the minor divisions are pointed with commas: "Mirth should be the embroidery of conversation, not the web; and wit the orna-

ment of the mind, not the furniture." The things enumerated must be separated by semicolons, when the enunciation of particulars is preceded by a colon : "The value of a maxim depends on four things: the correctness of the principle it embodies; the subject to which it relates; the extent of its application; and the ease with which it may be practically carried out." When *as* introduces an example, it is preceded by a semicolon. When several successive clauses have a common connection with a preceding or following clause, they are separated by semicolons; as, "Children, as they gamboled on the beach; reapers, as they gathered the harvest; mowers, as they rested from using the scythe; mothers, as they busied themselves about the household—were victims to an enemy, who disappeared the moment a blow was struck." "Reason as we may, it is impossible not to read in such a fate much that we know not how to interpret; much of provocation to cruel deeds and deep resentment; much of apology for wrong and perfidy; much of doubt and misgiving as to the past; much of painful recollections; much of dark foreboding." "Philosophers assert that Nature is unlimited; that her treasures are endless; that the increase of knowledge will never cease."

THE COLON.—This point is less used now than formerly: its place is supplied by the period, the semicolon, or the dash; and sometimes, even by the comma. The colon is used very differently by different writers. "He was heard to say, 'I have done with this world.'" Some writers would put a colon, some a comma, after *say*. "When the quoted passage is brought in without any introductory word, if short," says Quackenbos, "it is generally preceded by a comma; if long, by a colon; as, 'A simpleton, meeting a philosopher, asked him, "What affords wise men the

greatest pleasure?" Turning on his heel, the sage replied, "To get rid of fools."'"

Formal enumerations of particulars, and direct quotations, when introduced by such phrases as *in these words*, *as follows*, *the following*, *namely*, *this*, *these*, *thus*, etc., are properly preceded by a colon. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "Lord Bacon has summed up the whole matter in the following words: 'A little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds to religion.'" "The human family is composed of five races: first, the Caucasian; second, the Mongolian; third, the," etc.

"All were attentive to the godlike man,
When from his lofty couch he thus began:
'Great queen,'" etc.—Dryden.

When the quotation, or other matter, begins a new paragraph, the colon is, by many writers, followed with a dash; as, "The cloth being removed, the President rose and said:—

"'Ladies and gentlemen, we are,'" etc.

The colon is used to mark the greater breaks in sentences, when the lesser breaks are marked by semicolons. "You have called yourself an atom in the universe; you have said that you are but an insect in the solar blaze: is your present pride consistent with these professions?" "A clause is either independent or dependent: independent, if it forms an assertion by itself; dependent, if it enters into some other clause with the value of a part of speech." A colon is sometimes used instead of a period to separate two short sentences, which are closely connected. "Never

flatter people: leave that to such as mean to betray them." "Some things we can, and others we can not do: we can walk, but we can not fly."

THE PERIOD.—Complete sentences are always followed either by a period, or by an exclamation or an interrogation point.*

The period is also used after abbreviations; as, R. D. Van Nostrand, St. Louis, Mo.; Jno. B. Morris, M. D., F. R. S., London, Eng.; Jas. W. Wallack, Jr., New York City, N. Y.; Jas. B. Roberts, Elocutionist, Phila., Pa.

INTERROGATION-POINT.—This point is used after questions put by the writer, and after questions reported directly. "What can I do for you?" "Where are you going?" "What do you say?" cried the General. "The child still lives?" It should not be used when the question is reported indirectly. "He asked me where I was going." "The Judge asked the witness if he believed the man to be guilty."

EXCLAMATION-POINT.—This mark is placed after interjections, after sentences and clauses of sentences of passionate import, and after solemn invocations and addresses. "Zounds! the man's in earnest." "Pshaw! what can we do?" "Bah! what's that to me?" "Indeed! then I must look to it." "Look, my lord, it comes!" "Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!" "O heat, dry up my brains!" "Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!" "While in this part of the country, I once more revisited—and, alas, with what melancholy presentiments!—the home of my youth." "O rose of May!" "Oh, from this time forth, my thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth!" "O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet?"

* The only exception to this rule is the occasional use of the colon to separate two short sentences that are closely connected.

"Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty now stretches forth
Her leaden scepter o'er a slumbering world.
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound"!
—Young.

"Hail, holy light! offspring of heaven just born!"—Milton.

"But thou, O Hope! with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?"—Collins.

It will be observed that the interjection O is an exception to the rule: it is often followed by a comma, but never by an exclamation-point.

An exclamation-point sometimes gives the same words quite another meaning. The difference between "What's that?" and "What's that!" is obvious.

THE DASH.—Cobbett did not favor the use of this mark, as we see from the following: "Let me caution you against the use of what, by some, is called the *dash*. The dash is a stroke along the line; thus, 'I am rich—I was poor—I shall be poor again.' This is wild work indeed! Who is to know what is intended by these *dashes?* Those who have thought proper, like Mr. Lindley Murray, to place the *dash* amongst the *grammatical points*, ought to give us some rule relative to its different longitudinal dimensions in different cases. The *inch*, the *three-quarter-inch*, the *half-inch*, the *quarter-inch:* these would be something determinate; but '*the dash*,' without measure, must be a perilous thing for the young grammarian to handle. In short, '*the dash*' is a cover for ignorance as to the use of points, and it can answer no other purpose."

This is one of the few instances in which Cobbett was wrong. The *dash* is the proper point with which to mark an unexpected or emphatic pause, or a sudden break or transition. It is very often preceded by another point. "And

Huitzilopochtli—a sweet name to roll under one's tongue—for how many years has this venerable war-god blinked in the noonday sun!" "Crowds gathered about the newspaper bulletins, recalling the feverish scenes that occurred when the President's life was thought to be hanging by a thread. 'Wouldn't it be too bad,' said one, 'if, after all—no, I won't allow myself to think of it.'" "Was there ever—but I scorn to boast." "You are—no, I'll not tell you what you are."

"He suffered—but his pangs are o'er;
Enjoyed—but his delights are fled;
Had friends—his friends are now no more;
And foes—his foes are dead."—Montgomery.

"Greece, Carthage, Rome,—where are they?" "He chastens;—but he chastens to save."

Dashes are much used where parentheses were formerly employed. "In the days of Tweed the expression to divide fair—forcible, if not grammatical—acquired much currency." "In truth, the character of the great chief was depicted two thousand five hundred years before his birth, and depicted—such is the power of genius—in colors which will be fresh as many years after his death." "To render the Constitution perpetual—which God grant it may be!—it is necessary that its benefits should be practically felt by all parts of the country."

PARENTHESIS.—This mark is comparatively little used nowadays. The dash is preferred, probably because it disfigures the page less. The office of the parenthesis is to isolate a phrase which is merely incidental, and which might be omitted without detriment to the grammatical construction.

"'Know then this truth (enough for man to know),
Virtue alone is happiness below."—Pope.

"The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind."

BRACKETS.—This mark is used principally to inclose words improperly omitted by the writer, or words introduced for the purpose of explanation or to correct an error. The bracket is often used in this book.

THE APOSTROPHE.—This point is used to denote the omission of letters and sometimes of figures; as, Jan'y, '81; *I've* for *I have; you'll* for *you will; 'tis* for *it is; don't* for *do not; can't* for *can not;* It was in the year '93; the spirit of '76; It was in the years 1812, '13, and '14.

Also to denote the possessive case; as, Brown's house; the king's command; Moses' staff; for conscience' sake; the boys' garden.

Also with *s* to denote the plural of letters, figures, and signs; as, Cross your *t*'s, dot your *i*'s, and mind your *p*'s and *q*'s; make your 5's better, and take out the *x*'s.

CAPITALS.—A capital letter should begin every sentence, every line of verse, and every direct quotation.

All names of the Deity, of Jesus Christ, of the Trinity, and of the Virgin Mary must begin with a capital. Pronouns are usually capitalized when they refer to the Deity.

Proper names, and nouns and adjectives formed from proper names, names of streets, of the months, of the days of the week, and of the holidays, are capitalized.

Titles of nobility and of high office, when used to designate particular persons, are capitalized; as, the Earl of Dunraven, the Mayor of Boston, the Baron replied, the Cardinal presided.

THE PARAGRAPH.—In writing for the press, the division of matter into paragraphs is often quite arbitrary; in letter-writing, on the contrary, the several topics treated of should, as a rule, be isolated by paragraphic divisions. These di-

visions give one's letters a shapely appearance that they otherwise never have.

**Purchase.** This word is much preferred to its synonym *buy*, by that class of people who prefer the word *reside* to *live*, *procure* to *get*, *inaugurate* to *begin*, and so on. They are generally of those who are great in pretense, and who would be greater still if they were to pretend to all they have to pretend to.

**Purpose.** See PROPOSE.

**Quantity.** This word is often improperly used for *number*. *Quantity* should be used in speaking of what is measured or weighed; *number*, of what is counted. Examples: "What *quantity* of apples have you, and what *number* of pineapples?" "Delaware produces a large *quantity* of peaches and a large *number* of melons."

**Quit.**—This word means, properly, to leave, to go away from, to forsake; as, "Avaunt! *quit* my sight." This is the only sense in which the English use it. In America, it is generally used in the sense of to leave off, to stop; as, "*Quit* your nonsense"; "*Quit* laughing"; "*Quit* your noise"; "He has *quit* smoking," and so on.

**Quite.** This word originally meant completely, perfectly, totally, entirely, fully; and this is the sense in which it was used by the early writers of English. It is now often used in the sense of *rather;* as, "It is *quite* warm"; "She is *quite* tall"; "He is *quite* proficient." Sometimes it is incorrectly used in the sense of *considerable;* as, *quite* an amount, *quite* a number, *quite* a fortune. *Quite*, according to good modern usage, may qualify an adjective, but not a noun. "She is quite the lady," is a vile phrase, meaning, "She is very or *quite* ladylike."

**Railroad Depot.** Few things are more offensive to fastidious ears than to hear a railway *station* called a *depot*.

A depot is properly a place where goods or stores of any kind are kept; and the places at which the trains of a railroad—or, better, rail*way*—stop for passengers, or the points from which they start and at which they arrive, are, properly, the *stations*.

**Railway.** The English prefer this word to rail*road*.

**Raise the rent.** An expression incorrectly used for *increase the rent*.

**Rarely.** It is no uncommon thing to see this adverb improperly used in such sentences as, "It is very *rarely* that the puppets of the romancer assume," etc.—"Appletons' Journal," February, 1881, p. 177. "But," says the defender of this phraseology, "*rarely* qualifies a verb—the verb *to be*." Not at all. The sentence, if written out in full, would be, "It is a very rare thing that," etc., or "The circumstance is a very rare one that," etc., or "It is a very rare occurrence that," etc. To those who contend for "It is very *rarely* that," etc., I would say, It is very *sadly* that persons of culture will write and then defend—or rather try to defend—such grammar.

**Ratiocinate.** See EFFECTUATE.

**Real.**—This adjective is often vulgarly used in the sense of the adverb *very*; thus, *real* nice, *real* pretty, *real* angry, *real* cute, and so on.

**Recommend.** This word, which means to commend or praise to another, to declare worthy of esteem, trust, or favor, is sometimes put to strange uses. Example: "Resolved, that the tax-payers of the county be *recommended* to meet," etc. What the resolving gentlemen meant was, that the tax-payers should be *counseled* to meet.

**Redundancy.** See PLEONASM.

**Reliable.** This is a modern word which is often met

with; but it is not used by our careful writers. They prefer its synonym *trustworthy*, and argue that, in consequence of being ill-formed, *reliable* can not possibly have the signification in which it is used.

**Remainder.** See BALANCE.

**Rendition.** This word is much misused for *rendering*. Example: "The excellence of Mr. Gilbert's *rendition* of certain characters, Sir Peter and Sir Antony, for instance, is not equaled," etc. *Rendition* means the act of yielding possession, surrender, as the *rendition* of a town or fortress. The sentence above should read, "The excellence of Mr. Gilbert's *rendering*," etc. *Rendition* is also sometimes improperly used for *performance*.

**Reply.** See ANSWER.

**Reputation.** See CHARACTER.

**Reside.** A big word that Mr. Wouldbe uses where Mr. Is uses the little word *live*.

**Residence.** In speaking of a man's domicile, it is not only in better taste but more correct to use the term *house* than *residence*. A man has a *residence* in New York, when he has lived here long enough to have the right to exercise the franchise here; and he may have a *house* in Fifth Avenue where he *lives*. People who *are* live in houses; people who *would be* reside in residences. The former *buy* things; the latter *purchase* them.

**Rest.** See BALANCE.

**Restive.** Some of the dictionaries, Richard Grant White, and some other writers, contend that this word, when properly used, means unwilling to go, standing still stubbornly, obstinate, stubborn, and nothing else. In combating this opinion, Fitzedward Hall says: "Very few instances, I apprehend, can be produced, from our literature, of this use of *restive*." Webster gives impatient, un-

easy, as a second meaning; and this is the sense in which the word is nearly always used.

**Retire.** It is only the over-nice who use *retire* in the sense of *go to bed.*

**Reverend—Honorable.** Many persons are in doubt whether they should or should not put *the* before these adjectives. Emphatically, yes, they should. See "Words and Their Uses," by Richard Grant White, for a full discussion of the question; also "Good English," by Edward S. Gould.

**Rhetoric.** The art which has for its object the rendering of language effective is called *rhetoric.* Without some study of the art of composition, no one can expect to write well, or to judge the literary work of others.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance."

**Ride—Drive.** Fashion, both in England and in this country, says that we must always use the second of these words when we speak of going out in a carriage, although *ride* means, according to all the lexicographers, "to be carried on a horse or other animal, or in any kind of vehicle or carriage."

**Right.** Singularly enough, this word is made, by some people, to do service for *ought, in duty bound,* under *obligation* to; thus, "You had a *right* to tell me," meaning, "You should have told me." "The Colonists contended that they *had no right* to pay taxes," meaning, "They were *under no obligation* to pay taxes," i. e., that it was unjust to tax them.

**Right here.** The expressions "right here" and "right there" are Americanisms. Correctly, "just here" and "just there."

**Rolling.** The use of this participial adjective in the

sense of undulating is said to be an Americanism. Whether an Americanism or not, it would seem to be quite unobjectionable.

**Rubbers.** This word, in common with *gums* and *arctics*, is often, in defiance of good taste, used for *overshoes*.

**Sabbath.** This term was first used in English for Sunday, or Lord's day, by the Puritans. Nowadays it is little used in this sense. The word to use is *Sunday*.

**Sarcasm.** Bain says that *sarcasm* is vituperation softened in the outward expression by the arts and figures of disguise—epigram, innuendo, irony—and embellished with the figures of illustration. Crabb says that *sarcasm* is the indulgence only of personal resentment, and is never justifiable.

**Satire.** The holding up to ridicule of the follies and weaknesses of mankind, by way of rebuke, is called *satire*. Satire is general rather than individual, its object being the reformation of abuses. A *lampoon*, which has been defined as a *personal satire*, attacks the individual rather than his fault, and is intended to injure rather than to reform.

Said Sheridan: "Satires and lampoons on particular people circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties than by printing them."

**Saw.** The imperfect tense of the verb *to see* is carelessly used by good writers and speakers when they should use the perfect; thus, "I never *saw* anything like it before," when the meaning intended is, "I *have* never [in all my life] *seen* anything like it before [until now]." We say properly, "I never *saw* anything like it *when I was in Paris*"; but, when the period of time referred to extends to the time when the statement is made, it must be *have seen*.

Like mistakes are made in the use of other verbs, but they are hardly as common; yet we often hear such expressions as, "I *was* never in Philadelphia," "I never *went* to the theatre in my life," instead of *have been* in Philadelphia, and *have gone* to the theatre.

**Section.** The use of this word for region, neighborhood, vicinity, part (of the town or country), is said to be a Westernism. A *section* is a division of the public lands containing six hundred and forty acres.

**Seem—Appear.** Graham, in his "English Synonymes," says of these two words: "What *seems* is in the mind; what *appears* is external. Things *appear* as they present themselves to the eye; they *seem* as they are represented to the mind. Things *appear* good or bad, as far as we can judge by our senses. Things *seem* right or wrong as we determine by reflection. Perception and sensation have to do with appearing; reflection and comparison, with seeming. When things are not what they *appear*, our senses are deceived; when things are not what they *seem*, our judgment is at fault."

"No man had ever a greater power over himself, or was less the man he *seemed* to be, which shortly after *appeared* to everybody, when he cared less to keep on the mask."—Clarendon.

**Seldom or ever.** This phrase should be "seldom *if* ever," or "seldom or *never*."

**Seraphim.** This is the plural of *seraph*. "One of the *seraphim*." "To Thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry." See CHERUBIM.

**Set—Sit.** The former of these two verbs is often incorrectly used for the latter. To *set*; imperfect tense, *set*; participles, *setting*, *set*. To *sit*; imperfect tense, *sat*; participles, *sitting*, *sat*. To *set* means to put, to place, to plant;

to put in any place, condition, state, or posture. We say, to *set* about, to *set* against, to *set* out, to *set* going, to *set* apart, to *set* aside, to *set* down (to put in writing). To *sit* means to rest on the lower part of the body, to repose on a seat, to perch, as a bird, etc. We say, "*Sit* up," i. e., rise from lying to sitting; "We will *sit* up," i. e., will not go to bed; "*Sit* down," i. e., place yourself on a seat. We *sit* a horse and we *sit* for a portrait. Garments *sit* well or otherwise. Congress *sits*, so does a court. "I have *sat* up long enough." "I have *set* it on the table." We *set* down figures, but we *sit* down on the ground. We *set* a hen, and a hen *sits* on eggs. We should say, therefore, "as cross as a *sitting* [not, as a *setting*] hen."

**Settle.** This word is often inelegantly, if not incorrectly, used for *pay*. We *pay* our way, *pay* our fare, *pay* our hotel-bills, and the like. See, also, LOCATE.

**Shall and Will.** The nice distinctions that should be made between these two auxiliaries are, in some parts of the English-speaking world, often disregarded, and that, too, by persons of high culture. The proper use of *shall* and *will* can much better be learned from example than from precept. Many persons who use them, and also *should* and *would*, with well-nigh unerring correctness, do so unconsciously; it is simply habit with them, and they, though their culture may be limited, will receive a sort of verbal shock from Biddy's inquiry, "*Will* I put the kettle on, ma'am?" when your Irish or Scotch countess would not be in the least disturbed by it.

SHALL, *in an affirmative sentence, in the first person, and* WILL *in the second and third persons, merely announce future action.* Thus, "I *shall* go to town to-morrow." "I *shall* not; I *shall* wait for better weather." "We *shall* be glad to see you." "I *shall* soon be twenty." "We *shall*

set out early, and *shall* try to arrive by noon." "You *will* be pleased." "You *will* soon be twenty." "You *will* find him honest." "He *will* go with us."

SHALL, *in an affirmative sentence, in the second and third persons, announces the speaker's intention to control.* Thus, "You *shall* hear me out." "You *shall* go, sick or well." "He *shall* be my heir." "They *shall* go, whether they want to go or not."

WILL, *in the first person, expresses a promise, announces the speaker's intention to control, proclaims a determination.* Thus, "I *will* [I promise to] assist you." "I *will* [I am determined to] have my right." "We *will* [we promise to] come to you in the morning."

SHALL, *in an interrogative sentence, in the first and third persons, consults the will or judgment of another; in the second person, it inquires concerning the intention or future action of another.* Thus, "*Shall* I go with you?" "When *shall* we see you again?" "When *shall* I receive it?" "When *shall* I get well?" "When *shall* we get there?" "*Shall* he come with us?" "*Shall* you demand indemnity?" "*Shall* you go to town to-morrow?" "What *shall* you do about it?"

WILL, *in an interrogative sentence, in the second person, asks concerning the wish, and, in the third person, concerning the purpose or future action of others.* Thus, "*Will* you have an apple?" "*Will* you go with me to my uncle's?" "*Will* he be of the party?" "*Will* they be willing to receive us?" "When *will* he be here?"

*Will* can not be used interrogatively in the first person singular or plural. We can not say, "*Will* I go?" "*Will* I help you?" "*Will* I be late?" "*Will* we get there in time?" "*Will* we see you again soon?"

Official courtesy, in order to avoid the semblance of

compulsion, conveys its commands in the *you-will* form instead of the strictly grammatical *you-shall* form. It says, for example, "You *will* proceed to Key West, where you will find further instructions awaiting you."

A clever writer on the use of *shall* and *will* says that whatever concerns one's beliefs, hopes, fears, likes, or dislikes, can not be expressed in conjunction with *I will.* Are there no exceptions to this rule? If I say, "I think I *shall* go to Philadelphia to-morrow," I convey the impression that my going depends upon circumstances beyond my control; but if I say, "I think I *will* go to Philadelphia to-morrow," I convey the impression that my going depends upon circumstances within my control—that my going or not depends on mere inclination. We certainly must say, "I fear that I *shall* lose it"; "I hope that I *shall* be well"; "I believe that I *shall* have the ague"; "I hope that I *shall* not be left alone"; "I fear that we *shall* have bad weather"; "I *shall* dislike the country"; "I *shall* like the performance." The writer referred to asks, "How can one say, 'I *will* have the headache'?" I answer, Very easily, as every young woman knows. Let us see: "Mary, you know you promised John to drive out with him to-morrow; how *shall* you get out of it?" "Oh, I *will* have the headache!" We request that people *will* do thus or so, and not that they *shall.* Thus, "It is requested that no one *will* leave the room."

*Shall* is rarely, if ever, used for *will;* it is *will* that is used for *shall.* Expressions like the following are common: "Where *will* you be next week?" "I *will* be at home." "We *will* have dinner at six o'clock." "How *will* you go about it?" "When *will* you begin?" "When *will* you set out?" "What *will* you do with it?" In all such expressions, when it is a question of mere future action on

the part of the person speaking or spoken to, the auxiliary must be *shall*, and not *will*.

*Should* and *would* follow the regimen of *shall* and *will*. *Would* is often used for *should*; *should* rarely for *would*. Correct speakers say, "I *should* go to town to-morrow if I had a horse." "I *should* not; I *should* wait for better weather." "We *should* be glad to see you." "We *should* have started earlier, if the weather had been clear." "I *should* like to go to town, and *would* go if I could." "I *would* assist you if I could." "I *should* have been ill if I had gone." "I *would* I were home again!" "I *should* go fishing to-day if I were home." "I *should* so like to go to Europe!" "I *should* prefer to see it first." "I *should* be delighted." "I *should* be glad to have you sup with me." "I knew that I *should* be ill." "I feared that I *should* lose it." "I hoped that I *should* see him." "I thought I *should* have the ague." "I hoped that I *should* not be left alone." "I was afraid that we *should* have bad weather." "I knew I *should* dislike the country." "I *should* not like to do it, and *will* not [determination] unless compelled to."

**Shimmy.** "We derive from the French language our word *chemise* — pronounced *shemmeeze*. In French, the word denotes a man's shirt, as well as the under garment worn by women. In this country, it is often pronounced by people who should know better—*shimmy*. Rather than call it *shimmy*, resume the use of the old English words *shift* and *smock*. Good usage unqualifiedly condemns *gents*, *pants*, *kids*, *gums*, and *shimmy*."—"Vulgarisms and Other Errors of Speech."

**Should.** See OUGHT.

**Sick—Ill.** These words are often used indiscriminately. *Sick*, however, is the stronger word, and generally the better

word to use. *Ill* is used in England more than with us: there *sick* is generally limited to the expressing of nausea; as, "sick at the stomach."

**Signature, over or under?** A man writes *under*, not *over*, a signature. Charles Dickens wrote *under* the signature of "Boz"; Mr. Samuel L. Clemens writes *under* the signature of "Mark Twain." The reason given in Webster's Dictionary for preferring the use of *under* is absurd; viz., that the paper is *under* the hand in writing. The expression is elliptical, and has no reference to the position either of the signature or of the paper. "Given under my hand and seal" means "under the guarantee of my signature and my seal." "Under his own signature" or "name" means "under his own character, without disguise." "Under the signature of Boz" means "under the disguise of the assumed name Boz." We always write *under* a certain date, though the date be placed, as it often is, at the bottom of the page.

**Signs.** In one of the principal business streets of New York there is a sign which reads, "German Lace Store." Now, whether this is a store that makes a specialty of German laces, or whether it is a store where all kinds of lace are sold, kept by a German or after the German fashion, is something that the sign doubtless means to tell us, but, owing to the absence of a hyphen ("German-Lace Store," or "German Lace-Store"), does not tell us. Nothing is more common than erroneous punctuation in signs, and gross mistakes by the unlettered in the wording of the simplest printed matter.

The bad taste, incorrect punctuation, false grammar, and ridiculous nonsense met with on signs and placards, and in advertisements, are really surprising. An advertisement tells us that "a pillow which assists in procuring

sleep is a *benediction*"; a placard, that they have "Charlotte *de* Russe" for sale within, which means, if it means anything, that they have for sale somebody or something called Charlotte of Russian; and, then, on how many signs do we see the possessive case when the plural number is intended!

**Simile.** In rhetoric, a direct and formal comparison is called a *simile*. It is generally denoted by *like*, *as*, or *so*; as,

"I have ventured,
*Like* little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
These many summers in a sea of glory."

"Thy smile is *as* the dawn of vernal day."—Shakespeare.

"*As*, down in the sunless retreats of the ocean,
Sweet flow'rets are springing no mortal can see;
*So*, deep in my bosom, the prayer of devotion,
Unheard by the world, rises silent to thee."—Moore.

"'Tis with our judgments *as* with our watches; none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own."—Pope.

"Grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,
*As* richest soil the most luxuriant weeds."—Cowper.

"*As* no roads are so rough as those that have just been mended, *so* no sinners are so intolerant as those who have just turned saints."—"Lacon."

**Sin.** See CRIME.

**Since—Ago.** Dr. Johnson says of these two adverbs: "Reckoning time toward the present, we use *since*; as, 'It is a year *since* it happened': reckoning from the present, we use *ago*; as, 'It is a year *ago*.' This is not, perhaps, always observed."

Dr. Johnson's rule will hardly suffice as a sure guide. *Since* is often used for *ago*, but *ago* never for *since*. *Ago* is derived from the participle *agone*, while *since* comes from a

preposition. We say properly, "not long" or "some time *ago* [agone]." *Since* requires a verbal clause after it; as, "*Since* I saw you"; "*Since* he was here."

**Sing.** Of the two forms—*sang* and *sung*—for the imperfect tense of the verb to *sing*, the former—*sang*—is to be preferred.

**Sit.** See SET.

**Slang.** The slang that is heard among respectable people is made up of genuine words, to which an arbitrary meaning is given. It is always low, generally coarse, and not unfrequently foolish. With the exception of *cant*, there is nothing that is more to be shunned. We sometimes meet with persons of considerable culture who interlard their talk with slang expressions, but it is safe to assert that they are always persons of coarse natures.

**Smart.** See CLEVER.

**Smell of.** See TASTE OF.

**So.** See AS; SUCH; THAT.

**So much so.** "The shipments by the coast steamers are very large, *so much so* [large?] as to tax the capacity of the different lines."—"Telegram," September 19, 1881. The sentence should be, "The shipments by the coast steamers are very large, *so large* as to tax," etc.

**Solecism.** In rhetoric, a solecism is defined as an offense against the rules of grammar by the use of words in a wrong construction; false syntax.

"Modern grammarians designate by *solecism* any word or expression which does not agree with the established usage of writing or speaking. But, as customs change, that which at one time is considered a *solecism* may at another be regarded as correct language. A *solecism*, therefore, differs from a *barbarism*, inasmuch as the latter consists in the use of a word or expression which is altogether con-

trary to the spirit of the language, and can, properly speaking, never become established as correct language." —"Penny Cyclopædia." See, also, BARBARISM

**Some.** This word is not unfrequently misused for *somewhat;* thus, "She is *some* better to-day." It is likewise often misused for *about;* thus, "I think it is *some* ten miles from here": read, "*about* ten miles from here."

**Specialty.** This form has within a recent period been generally substituted for *speciality*. There is no apparent reason, however, why the *i* should be dropped, since it is required by the etymology of the word, and is retained in nearly all other words of the same formation.

**Specious Fallacy.** A *fallacy* is a sophism, a logical artifice, a deceitful or false appearance; while *specious* means having the appearance of truth, plausible. Hence we see that the very essence of a *fallacy* is its *speciousness*. We may very properly say that a *fallacy* is more or less *specious*, but we can not properly say that a fallacy *is* specious, since without speciousness we can have no fallacies.

**Splendid.** This poor word is used by the gentler sex to qualify well-nigh everything that has their approval, from a sugar-plum to the national capitol. In fact, *splendid* and *awful* seem to be about the only adjectives some of our superlative young women have in their vocabularies.

**Standpoint.** This is a word to which many students of English seriously object, and among them are the editors of some of our daily papers, who do not allow it to appear in their columns. The phrase to which no one objects is, *point of view.*

**State.** This word, which properly means to make known specifically, to explain particularly, is often misused for *say*. When *say* says all one *wants* to say, why use a more pretentious word?

**Stop.** "Where are you *stopping?*" "At the Metropolitan." The proper word to use here is *staying*. *To stop* means to cease to go forward, to leave off; and *to stay* means to abide, to tarry, to dwell, to sojourn. We *stay*, not *stop*, at home, at a hotel, or with a friend, as the case may be.

**Storm.** Many persons indulge in a careless use of this word, using it when they mean to say simply that it rains or snows. To a *storm* a violent commotion of the atmosphere is indispensable. A very high wind constitutes a storm, though it be dry.

**Straightway.** Here is a good Anglo-Saxon word of *two* syllables whose place, without any good reason, is being usurped by the Latin word *immediately*, of *five* syllables.

**Street.** We live *in*, not *on*—meet our acquaintances *in*, not *on*—things occur *in*, not *on*—houses are built *in*, not *on*, the street, and so forth.

**Style.** This is a term that is used to characterize the peculiarities that distinguish a writer or a composition. Correctness and clearness properly belong to the domain of *diction;* simplicity, conciseness, gravity, elegance, diffuseness, floridity, force, feebleness, coarseness, etc., belong to the domain of *style.*

**Subjunctive Mood.** This mood is unpopular with not a few now-a-day grammarians. One says that it is rapidly falling into disuse; that, in fact, there is good reason to suppose it will soon become obsolete. Another says that it would, perhaps, be better to abolish it entirely, as its use is a continual source of dispute among grammarians and of perplexity to schools. Another says that it is a universal stumbling-block; that nobody seems to understand it, although almost everybody attempts to use it.

That the subjunctive mood is much less used now than it was a hundred years ago is certain, but that it is obsolescent is very far from certain. It would not be easy, I think, to find a single contemporary writer who does not use it. That it is not always easy to determine what form of it we should employ is very true; but if we are justified in abolishing it altogether, as Mr. Chandler suggests, because its correct use is not always easy, then we are also justified in abolishing the use of *shall* and *will*, and of the prepositions, for surely their right use is likewise at times most puzzling. Meanwhile, most persons will think it well to learn to use the subjunctive mood properly. With that object in view, one can not, perhaps, do better than to attend to what Dr. Alexander Bain, Professor of Logic in the University of Aberdeen, says upon the subject. In Professor Bain's "Higher English Grammar" we find:

"In subordinate clauses.—In a clause expressing a condition, and introduced by a conjunction of condition, the verb is sometimes, but not always, in the subjunctive mood: 'If I *be* able,' 'if I *were* strong enough,' 'if thou *should* come.'

"The subjunctive inflexions have been wholly lost. The sense that something is wanting appears to have led many writers to use indicative forms where the subjunctive might be expected. The tendency appears strongest in the case of 'wert,' which is now used as indicative (for 'wast') only in poetical or elevated language.

"The following is the rule given for the use of the subjunctive mood:

"When in a conditional clause it is intended to express doubt or denial, use the subjunctive mood.* 'If I *were* sure of what you tell me, I would go.'

* "Dr. Angus on the 'English Tongue,' art. 527.

"When the conditional clause is *affirmative* and *certain*, the verb is *indicative:* 'If that *is* the case' (as you now tell me, and as I believe), 'I can understand you.' This is equivalent to a clause of assumption, or supposition: 'That being the case,' 'inasmuch as that is the case,' etc.

"As *futurity* is by its nature uncertain, the subjunctive is extensively used for future conditionality: 'If it *rain*, we shall not be able to go'; 'if I *be* well'; 'if he *come* shortly'; 'if thou *return* at all in peace'; 'though he *slay* me, yet will I trust in him.' These events are all in the uncertain future, and are put in the subjunctive.*

"A future result or consequence is expressed by the subjunctive in such instances as these: 'I will wait till he *return*'; 'no fear lest dinner *cool*'; 'thou shalt stone him with stones, that he *die*'; 'take heed lest at any time your hearts *be* overcharged with surfeiting.'

"Uncertainty as to a past event may arise from our own ignorance, in which case the subjunctive is properly employed, and serves the useful purpose of distinguishing

* "In the following passages, the indicative mood would be more suitable than the subjunctive: 'If thou *be* the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread'; 'if thou *be* the Son of God, come down from the cross.' For, although the address was not sincere on the part of the speakers, they really meant to make the supposition or to grant that he was the Son of God; 'seeing that thou *art* the Son of God.' Likewise in the following: 'Now if Christ *be* preached, that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection from the dead?' The meaning is, 'Seeing now that Christ *is* preached.' In the continuation, the conditional clauses are of a different character, and 'be' is appropriate: 'But if there *be* no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ *be* not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.' Again, 'If thou *bring* thy gift to the altar, and there remember*est*,' etc. Consistency and correctness require 'remember.'"—Harrison on the "English Language," p. 287.

our ignorance from our knowledge. 'If any of my readers *has* looked with so little attention upon the world around him'; this would mean—'as I know that they have.' The meaning intended is probably—'as I do not know whether they have or not,' and therefore the subjunctive 'have' is preferable. 'If ignorance *is* bliss,' which I (ironically) admit. Had Gray been speaking seriously, he would have said, 'if ignorance *be* bliss,' he himself dissenting from the proposition.

"A wish contrary to the fact takes the subjunctive: 'I wish he *were* here' (which he is not).

"An intention not yet carried out is also subjunctive: 'The sentence is that you *be* imprisoned.'

"The only correct form of the future subjunctive is—'if I should.' We may say, 'I do not know whether or not I *shall* come'; but 'if I shall come,' expressing a condition, is not an English construction. 'If he will' has a real meaning, as being the present subjunctive of the verb 'will': 'if he be willing,' 'if he have the will.' It is in accordance with good usage to express a future subjunctive meaning by a present tense; but in that case the form must be strictly subjunctive, and not indicative. 'If any member *absents* himself, he shall forfeit a penny for the use of the club'; this ought to be either 'absent,' or 'should absent.' 'If thou *neglectest* or *doest* unwillingly what I command thee, I will rack thee with old cramps'; better, 'if thou *neglect* or *do* unwillingly,' or 'if thou should neglect.' The indicative would be justified by the speaker's belief that the supposition is sure to turn out to be the fact.

"The past subjunctive may imply denial; as, 'if the book *were* in the library (as it is not), it should be at your service.'

"'If the book *be* in the library,' means, 'I do not know

whether it be or not.' We have thus the power of discriminating *three* different suppositions. 'If the book *is* in the library' (as I know it is); 'if it *be*' (I am uncertain); 'if it *were*' (as I know it is not). So, 'if it rains,' 'if it rain,' 'if it rained.' 'Nay, and the villains march wide between the legs, as if they *had* gyves on,' implying that they had not.

"The same power of the past tense is exemplified in 'if I *could*, I would,' which means, 'I can not'; whereas, 'if I can, I will,' means 'I do not know.'

"The past subjunctive may be expressed by an inversion: '*Had* I the power,' '*were* I as I have been.'

"In Principal Clauses.—The principal clause in a conditional statement also takes the subjunctive form when it refers to what is future and contingent, and when it refers to what is past and uncertain, or denied. 'If he should try, he *would* succeed'; 'if I had seen him, I *should* have asked him.'

"The usual forms of the subjunctive in the principal clause are 'would,' 'should,' 'would have,' 'should have'; and it is to be noted that in this application the second persons take the inflexional ending of the indicative: 'shouldst,' 'wouldst.'

"'If 'twere done when 'tis done, then 't*were* (would be) well
It *were* (should be) done quickly.'

"The English idiom appears sometimes to permit the use of an indicative where we should expect a subjunctive form. 'Many acts, that *had* been otherwise blamable, were employed'; 'I *had* fainted, unless I had believed,' etc.

"'Which else *lie* furled and shrouded in the soul.'

"In 'else' there is implied a conditional clause that would suit 'lie'; or the present may be regarded as a more vivid form of expression. 'Had' may be indicative; just as we sometimes find pluperfect indicative for pluper-

fect subjunctive in the same circumstances in Latin. We may refer it to the general tendency, as already seen in the uses of 'could,' 'would,' 'should,' etc., to express conditionality by a past tense ; or the indicative may be used as a more direct and vivid mode. 'Had' may be subjunctive ; 'I *had* fainted' is, in construction, analogous to 'I *should* have fainted' ; the word for futurity, 'shall,' not being necessary to the sense, is withdrawn, and its past inflexion transferred to 'have.' Compare Germ. *würde haben* and *hätte*."

In addition to the foregoing, we find in Professor Bain's "Composition Grammar" the following:

"The case most suited to the subjunctive is *contingent futurity*, or the expression of an event unknown absolutely, as being still in the future: 'If to-morrow *be* fine, I will walk with you.'

"'Unless I *were* prepared,' insinuates pretty strongly that I am or am not prepared, according to the manner of the principal clause.

"'What's a tall man unless he *fight?*'

"'The sword hath ended him : so shall it thee,
Unless thou *yield* thee as my prisoner.'

"'Who but must laugh, if such a man there *be?*
Who would not weep, if Atticus *were* he?'

"'I am to second Ion if he *fail*' ; the failing is left quite doubtful. 'I should very imperfectly execute the task which I have undertaken if I *were* merely to treat of battles and sieges.' Macaulay thus implies that the scope of his work is to be wider than mere battles and sieges.

"'The subjunctive appears in some other constructions. 'I hope to see the exhibition before *it close*' ; 'wait till he *return*' ; 'thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he

*come*'; 'take heed lest passion *sway* thy judgment'; 'speak to me, though it *be* in wrath'; 'if he *smite* him with an instrument of iron so that he *die*, he is a murderer'; 'beware this night that thou *cross* not my footsteps' (Shelley).

"Again. 'Whatever this *be*'; 'whoever he *be*'; 'howe'er it *be*' (Tennyson); and such like.

"'And *as long*, O God, *as* she
*Have* a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.'

"The Future Subjunctive is given in our scheme of the verb as 'should' in all persons: 'If I should, if thou should, if he should.' In old English, we have 'thou *shouldst*': 'if thou, Lord, *shouldst* mark iniquities.'

"An inverted conditional form has taken deep root in our language, and may be regarded as an elegant and forcible variety. While dispensing with the conjunction, it does not cause ambiguity; nevertheless, conditionality is well marked.

"'*If* you *should* abandon your Penelope and your home for Calypso, ——': '*should* you abandon ——.'

"'*Go* not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.'

"'Here had we now our country's honor roof'd
*Were* the graced person of our Banquo present.'

"'*Be* thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
*Bring* with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
*Be* thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee.'

" '*Come* one, *come* all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.'—Scott.

" The following examples are given by Mätzner :

" 'Varney's communications, *be* they what they might, were operating in his favor.'—Scott.

" 'Governing persons, *were* they never so insignificant intrinsically, have for most part plenty of Memoir-writers.' —Carlyle.

" 'Even *were* I disposed, I could not gratify the reader.'—Warren.

" 'Bring them back to me, *cost* what it may.'—Coleridge, 'Wallenstein.'

" 'And *will* you, *nill* you, I will marry you.'—'Taming of the Shrew.'

" *Were* is used in the principal clause for 'should be' or 'would be.' *

" 'I *were* (= should be) a fool, not less than if a panther
Were panic-stricken by the antelope's eye,
If she escape me.'—Shelley.

" 'Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
Such parting *were* too petty.'

" 'He *were* (= would be) no lion, were not Romans hinds.'

" 'Should he be roused out of his sleep to-night, . . .
It *were* not well; indeed it *were* not well.'—Shelley.

" *Had* is sometimes used in the principal clause for 'should have' or 'would have.' †

* " So, in German, *wäre* for *würde sein*. 'Hätt' ich Schwingen, hätt' ich Flügel, nach den Hügeln *zög'* ich hin,' for '*würde* ich *ziehen*.' "

† " So, in German, *hätte* occurs for *würde haben*. 'Wäre er da gewesen, so *hätten* wir ihn gesehen,' for 'so *würden* wir ihn gesehen *haben*.' *Hätten* is still conditional, not indicative. In Latin, the

"'Had I known this before we set out, I think I *had* (= would have) remained at home.'—Scott.

"'Hadst thou been kill'd when first thou didst presume,
Thou *hadst* not lived to kill a son of mine.'

"'If he
Had killed me, he *had* done a kinder deed.'

"'For once he *had* been ta'en or slain,
An it had not been his ministry.'—Scott.

"'If thou hadst said him nay, it *had* been sin.' *

"'*Had* better, rather, best, as lief, as well, etc.,' is a form that is explained under this heading. 'Had' stands for 'would have.' The exploded notion that 'had' is a corrupted 'would' must be guarded against.

"'I *had* as lief not be.' That is—'I *would* as lief *have* not (*to*) be' = 'I would as willingly (or as soon) have non-existence.'

"'*Had* you rather Cæsar were living——?' '*Would* you rather *have* (*would* you *prefer* that) Cæsar were living?'

"'He *had* better reconsider the matter' is 'he *would* better *have* (*to*) reconsider the matter.'

"'I *had* rather be a kitten and cry mew
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers;
I *had* rather hear a brazen canstick turned.'

"Let us compare this form with another that appears side by side with it in early writers. (Cp. Lat. 'habeo' and 'mihi est.')

"The construction of 'had' is thus illustrated in Chaucer, as in—Nonne Prestes Tale, 300:

pluperfect *indicative* is occasionally used; which is explained as a more vivid form."

* "In *principal* clauses the inflection of the second person is always retained: 'thou had*st*,' 'thou would*st*, should*st*,' etc. In the example, the subordinate clause, although subjunctive, shows, 'had*st*.' And this usage is exceedingly common."

"'By God, I *hadde* levere than my scherte,
That ye hadde rad his legend, as I have.'

"Compare now:

"'Ah *me were levere* with lawe *loose* my lyf
Then so to fote hem *falle*.'—Wright, 'Polit. S.'

"Here 'were' is unquestionably for 'would be'; and the whole expression might be given by 'had,' thus: 'Ah, *I hadde* levere ——,' '(to) *loose*' and '(to) *falle*,' changing from subjects of 'were' to objects of 'hadde.'

"So, in the Chaucer example above, if we substitute 'be' for 'have,' we shall get the same meaning, thus: 'By God, *me were* levere ——.' The interchange helps us to see more clearly that 'hadde' is to be explained as subjunctive for 'would have.'" See INDICATIVE and SUBJUNCTIVE.

**Such.** "I have never before seen *such* a large ox." By a little transposing of the words of this sentence, we have, "I have never before seen an ox *such* large," which makes it quite clear that we should say *so large an ox* and not *such a large ox*. As proof that this error in the use of *such* is common, we find in Mr. George Washington Moon's "Dean's English and Bad English," the sentence, "With all due deference to *such* a high authority on *such* a very important matter." With a little transposing, this sentence is made to read, "With all due deference to an authority *such* high on a matter *such* very important." It is clear that the sentence should read, "With all due deference to *so* high an authority on *so* very important a matter." The phrases, *such* a handsome, *such* a lovely, *such* a long, *such* narrow, etc., are incorrect, and should be *so* handsome, *so* lovely, *so* long, and so on.

**Summon.** This verb comes in for its full share of mauling. We often hear such expressions as "I will *summons*

him," instead of *summon* him ; and "He was *summonsed*," instead of *summoned*.

**Superfluous Words.** "Whenever I try to write well, I *always* find I can do it." "I shall have finished by the *latter* end of the week." "Iron sinks *down* in water." "He combined *together* all the facts." "My brother called on me, and we *both* took a walk." "I can do it *equally* as well as he." "We could not forbear *from* doing it." "Before I go, I must *first* be paid." "We were compelled to return *back*." "We forced them to retreat *back* fully a mile." "His conduct was approved *of* by everybody." "They conversed *together* for a long time." "The balloon rose *up* very rapidly." "Give me another *one*." "Come home as soon as *ever* you can." "Who finds him *in* money?" "He came in last *of all*." "He has *got* all he can carry." "What have you *got?*" "No matter what I have *got*." "I have *got* the headache." "Have you *got* any brothers?" "No, but I have *got* a sister." All the words in *italics* are superfluous.

**Superior.** This word is not unfrequently used for able, excellent, gifted ; as, "She is a *superior* woman," meaning an *excellent* woman ; "He is a *superior* man," meaning an *able* man. The expression *an inferior man* is not less objectionable.

**Supposititious.** This word is *properly* used in the sense of put by a trick into the place or character belonging to another, spurious, counterfeit, not genuine ; and *improperly* in the sense of conjectural, hypothetical, imaginary, presumptive ; as, "This is a *supposititious* case," meaning an *imaginary* or *presumptive* case. "The English critic derived his materials from a stray copy of some *supposititious* indexes devised by one of the 'Post' reporters."—"Nation." Here is a correct use of the word.

**Swosh.** There is a kind of ill-balanced brain in which the reflective and the imaginative very much outweight the perceptive. Men to whom this kind of an organization has been given generally have active minds, but their minds never present anything clearly. To their mental vision all is ill-defined, chaotic. They see everything in a haze. Whether such men talk or write, they are verbose, illogical, intangible, will-o'-the-wispish. Their thoughts are phantomlike; like shadows, they continually escape their grasp. In their talk they will, after long dissertations, tell you that they have not said just what they would like to say; there is always a subtle, lurking something still unexpressed, which something is the real essence of the matter, and which your penetration is expected to divine. In their writings they are eccentric, vague, labyrinthine, pretentious, transcendental,* and frequently ungrammatical. These men, if write they must, should confine themselves to the descriptive; for when they enter the essayist's domain, which they are very prone to do, they write what I will venture to call *swosh.*

We find examples in plenty of this kind of writing in the essays of Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson. Indeed, the impartial critic who will take the trouble to examine any of Mr. Emerson's essays at all carefully, is quite sure to come to the conclusion that Mr. Emerson has seen everything he has ever made the subject of his essays very much as London is seen from the top of Saint Paul's in a fog.

* To those who are not quite clear as to what transcendentalism is, the following lucid definition will be welcome: "It is the spiritual cognoscence of psychological irrefragability connected with concutient ademption of incolumnient spirituality and etherealized contention of subsultory concretion." Translated by a New York lawyer, it stands thus: "Transcendentalism is two holes in a sand-bank: a storm washes away the sand-bank without disturbing the holes."

Mr. Emerson's definition of Nature runs thus: "Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that is separate from us, all which philosophy distinguishes from the *Not Me*—that is, both Nature and Art, and all other men, and my own body—must be ranked under this name 'NATURE.' In enumerating the values of Nature and casting up their sum, I shall use the word in both senses—in its common and in its philosophical import. In inquiries so general as our present one, the inaccuracy is not material; no confusion of thought will occur. *Nature*, in the common sense, refers to essences unchanged by man: space, the air, the river, the leaf. *Art* is applied to the mixture of his will with the same things, as in a house, a canal, a picture, a statue. But his operations, taken together, are so insignificant—a little chipping, baking, patching, and washing—that in an impression so grand as that of the world on the human mind they do not vary the result."

In "Letters and Social Aims" Mr. Emerson writes: "Eloquence is the power to translate a truth into language perfectly intelligible to the person to whom you speak. He who would convince the worthy Mr. Dunderhead of any truth which Dunderhead does not see, must be a master of his art. Declamation is common; but such possession of thought as is here required, such practical chemistry as the conversion of a truth written in God's language into a truth in Dunderhead's language, is one of the most beautiful and cogent weapons that is forged in the shop of the Divine Artificer."

The first paragraph of Mr. Emerson's "Essay on Art" reads: "All departments of life at the present day—Trade, Politics, Letters, Science, or Religion—seem to feel, and to labor to express, the identity of their law. They are

rays of one sun ; they translate each into a new language the sense of the other. They are sublime when seen as emanations of a Necessity contradistinguished from the vulgar Fate by being instant and alive, and dissolving man, as well as his works, in its flowing beneficence. This influence is conspicuously visible in the principles and history of Art."

Another paragraph from Mr. Emerson's "Essay on Eloquence": "The orator, as we have seen, must be a substantial personality. Then, first, he must have power of statement—must have the fact, and know how to tell it. In a knot of men conversing on any subject, the person who knows most about it will have the ear of the company, if he wishes it, and lead the conversation, no matter what genius or distinction other men there present may have ; and, in any public assembly, him who has the facts, and can and will state them, people will listen to, though he is otherwise ignorant, though he is hoarse and ungrateful, though he stutters and screams."

Mr. Emerson, in his "Essay on Prudence," writes : "There are all degrees of proficiency in knowledge of the world. It is sufficient to our present purpose to indicate three. One class live to the utility of the symbol, esteeming health and wealth a final good. Another class live above this mark to the beauty of the symbol, as the poet and artist, and the naturalist and man of science. A third class live above the beauty of the symbol to the beauty of the thing signified ; these are wise men. The first class have common sense ; the second, taste ; and the third, spiritual perception. Once in a long time a man traverses the whole scale, and sees and enjoys the symbol solidly ; then, also, has a clear eye for its beauty ; and, lastly, whilst he pitches his tent on this sacred volcanic isle

of nature, does not offer to build houses and barns thereon, reverencing the splendor of God which he sees bursting through each chink and cranny."

Those who are wont to accept others at their self-assessment and to see things through other people's eyes —and there are many such—are in danger of thinking this kind of writing very fine, when in fact it is not only the veriest *swosh*, but that kind of swosh that excites at least an occasional doubt with regard to the writer's sanity. We can make no greater mistake than to suppose that the reason we do not understand these rhetorical contortionists is because they are so subtle and profound. We understand them quite as well as they understand themselves. At their very best, they are but incoherent diluters of other men's ideas. They have but one thing to recommend them —honesty. They believe in themselves.

"Whatever is dark is deep. Stir a puddle, and it is deeper than a well."—Swift.

**Synecdoche.** The using of the name of a part for that of the whole, the name of the whole for that of a part, or the using of a definite number for an indefinite, is called, in rhetoric, *synecdoche*. "The bay was covered with *sails*"; i. e., with *ships*. "The man was old, careworn, and gray"; i. e, literally, *his hair*, not the man, was gray. "*Nine tenths* of every man's happiness depends on the reception he meets with in the world." "He had seen seventy *winters*." "Thus spoke the *tempter*": here the part of the character is named that suits the occasion.

"His roof was at the service of the outcast; the unfortunate ever found a welcome at his threshold."

**Take.** I copy from the "London Queen": "The verb *to take* is open to being considered a vulgar verb when used in reference to dinner, tea, or to refreshments of any

kind. 'Will you *take*' is not considered *comme il faut;* the verb in favor for the offering of civilities being *to have.*" According to "The Queen," then, we must say, "Will you *have* some dinner, tea, coffee, wine, fish, beef, salad," etc.

**Taste of.** The redundant *of*, often used, in this country, in connection with the transitive verbs *to taste* and *to smell*, is a Yankeeism. We *taste* or *smell* a thing, not taste *of* nor smell *of* a thing. The neuter verbs *to taste* and *to smell* are often followed by *of*. "If butter *tastes of* brass." "For age but *tastes of* pleasures."

"You shall stifle in your own report,
And *smell of* calumny."—Shakespeare.

**Tautology.** Among the things to be avoided in writing is *tautology*, which is *the repeating of the same thought*, whether in the same or in different words.

**Tautophony.** "A regard for harmony requires us, in the progress of a sentence, to avoid repeating a sound by employing the same word more than once, or using, in contiguous words, similar combinations of letters. This fault is known as *tautology*."—Dr. G. P. Quackenbos, "Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric," p. 300. Dr. Quackenbos is in error. The repetition of the same *sense* is tautology, and the repetition of the same *sound*, or, as Dr. Quackenbos has it, "the repeating of a sound by employing the same word more than once, or by using in contiguous words similar combinations of letters," is *tautophony.*

**Teach.** To impart knowledge, to inform, to instruct; as, "*Teach* me how to do it"; "*Teach* me to swim"; "He *taught* me to write." The uncultured often misuse *learn* for *teach*. See LEARN.

**Tense.** The errors made in the use of the tenses are manifold. The one most frequently made by persons of

culture—the one that everybody makes would, perhaps, be nearer the fact—is that of using the *imperfect* instead of the *perfect* tense; thus, "I never *saw* it played but once": say, *have seen.* "He was the largest man I ever *saw*": say, *have seen.* "I never in my life *had* such trouble": say, *have had.* Another frequent error, the making of which is not confined to the unschooled, is that of using two verbs in a past tense when only one should be in that time; thus, "I intended to *have gone*": say, *to go.* "It was my intention to *have* come": say, *to come.* "I expected to *have found* you here": say, *to find.* "I was very desirous to *have gone*": say, *to go.* "He was better than I expected to *have found* him": say, *to find.*

Among other common errors are the following: "I *seen* him when he *done* it": say, "I *saw* him when he *did* it." "I should have *went* home": say, *gone.* "If he had *went*": say, *gone.* "I wish you had *went*": say, *gone.* "He has *went* out": say, *gone.* "I *come* to town this morning": say, *came.* "He *come* to me for advice": say, *came.* "It *begun* very late": say, *began.* "It had already *began*": say, *begun.* "The following toasts were *drank*": say, *drunk.* "His text was that God *was* love": say, *is* love. Another error is made in such sentences as these: "If I had *have* known": say, *had known.* "If he had *have* come as he promised": say, *had come.* "If you had *have* told me": say, *had told.*

**Testimony.** See EVIDENCE.

**Than.** *Than* and *as* implying comparison have the same case after as before them. "He owes more than *me*": read, than *I*—i. e., more than *I owe.* "John is not so old as *her*": read, as *she*—i. e., as *she is.* We should say, then, "He is stronger than *she*," "She is older than *he*," "You are richer than *I*," etc. But it does not always

happen that the nominative case comes after *than* or *as*. "I love you more than *him*," "I give you more than *him*," "I love you as well as *him*"; that is to say, "I love you more than *I love him*," "I give you more than *I give him*," "I love you as well as *I love him*." Take away *him* and put *he* in all these cases, and the grammar is just as good, but the meaning is quite different. "I love you as well as *him*," means that I love you as well *as I love him;* but, "I love you as well as *he*," means that I love you as well *as he loves you*.

**Than whom.** Cobbett, in his "Grammar of the English Language," says: "There is an erroneous way of employing *whom*, which I must point out to your particular attention, because it is so often seen in very good writers, and because it is very deceiving. 'The Duke of Argyll, *than whom* no man was more hearty in the cause.' 'Cromwell, *than whom* no man was better skilled in artifice.' A hundred such phrases might be collected from Hume, Blackstone, and even from Drs. Blair and Johnson. Yet they are bad grammar. In all such cases, *who* should be made use of: for it is *nominative* and not objective. 'No man was more hearty in the cause *than he was*'; 'No man was better skilled in artifice *than he was*.'* It is a very common Parliament-house phrase, and therefore presumably *corrupt;* but it is a Dr. Johnson phrase, too: 'Pope, *than whom* few men had more vanity.' The Doctor did not say, 'Myself, *than whom* few men have been found more base, having, in my dictionary, described a pensioner as a slave of state, and having afterward myself become a pensioner.'

"I differ in this matter from Bishop Lowth, who says

* "Cromwell—*than he* no man was more skilled in artifice; or, Cromwell—no man was more skilled in artifice *than he* (was)."

that 'The relative *who*, having reference to no verb or preposition understood, but only to its antecedent, when it follows *than*, is *always in the objective case;* even though the pronoun, if substituted in its place, would be in the nominative.' And then he gives an instance from Milton. 'Beelzebub, *than whom*, Satan except, none higher sat.' It is curious enough that this sentence of the Bishop is itself ungrammatical! Our poor unfortunate *it* is so placed as to make it a matter of doubt whether the Bishop meant it to relate to *who* or to *its antecedent*. However, we know its meaning; but, though he says that *who*, when it follows *than*, is always in the objective case, he gives us no reason for this departure from a clear general principle; unless we are to regard as a reason the example of Milton, who has committed many hundreds, if not thousands, of grammatical errors, many of which the Bishop himself has pointed out. There is a sort of side-wind attempt at reason in the words, 'having reference to no *verb* or *preposition* understood.' I do not see the *reason*, even if this could be; but it appears to me impossible that a noun or pronoun can exist in a grammatical state without having reference to some *verb* or *preposition*, either expressed or understood. What is meant by Milton? 'Than Beelzebub, none *sat* higher, except Satan.' And when, in order to avoid the repetition of the word Beelzebub, the relative becomes necessary, the full construction must be, 'no devil sat higher *than who* sat, except Satan'; and not, 'no devil sat higher *than whom* sat.'* The supposition that there can be a noun or pronoun which has reference to *no verb* and *no preposition*, is certainly a mistake."

Of this, Dr. Fitzedward Hall remarks, in his "Recent Exemplifications of False Philology": "That any one

* "No devil sat higher than *he* sat, except Satan."

but Cobbett would abide this as English is highly improbable ; and how the expression—a quite classical one—which he discards can be justified grammatically, except by calling its *than* a preposition, others may resolve at their leisure and pleasure."

**Thanks.** There are many persons who think it in questionable taste to use *thanks* for *thank you.*

**That.** The best writers often appear to grope after a separate employment for the several relatives.

"'THAT' *is the proper restrictive, explicative, limiting, or defining relative.*

"'*That,*' the neuter of the definite article, was early in use as a neuter relative. All the other oldest relatives gradually dropt away, and 'that' came to be applied also to plural antecedents, and to masculines and feminines. When 'as,' 'which,' and 'who' came forward to share the work of 'that,' there seems to have arisen not a little uncertainty about the relatives, and we find curious double forms : 'whom that,' 'which that,' 'which as,' etc. Gower has, 'Venus *whose* priest *that* I am' ; Chaucer writes—'This Abbot *which that* was an holy man,' 'his love *the which that* he oweth.' By the Elizabethan period, these double forms have disappeared, and all the relatives are used singly without hesitation. From then till now, 'that' has been struggling with 'who' and 'which' to regain superior favor, with varying success. 'Who' is used for persons, 'which' for things, in both numbers ; so is 'that' ; and the only opportunity of a special application of 'that' lies in the important distinction between coördination and restriction. Now, as 'who' and 'which' are most commonly preferred for coördination, it would be a clear gain to confine them to this sense, and to reserve 'that' for the restrictive application alone. This arrangement, then, would *fall in with*

*the most general use of 'that,' especially beyond the limits of formal composition.*

"The use of 'that' solely as restrictive, with 'who' and 'which' solely as coördinating, *also avoids ambiguities* that often attend the indiscriminate use of 'who' and 'which' for coördinate and for restrictive clauses. Thus, when we say, 'his conduct surprised his English friends, *who* had not known him long,' we may mean either that his English friends generally were surprised (the relative being, in that case, *coördinating*), or that only a portion of them—namely, the particular portion that had not known him long—were surprised. In this last case the relative is meant to define or explain the antecedent, and the doubt would be removed by writing thus: 'his English friends *that* had not known him long.' So in the following sentence there is a similar ambiguity in the use of 'which': 'the next winter *which* you will spend in town will give you opportunities of making a more prudent choice.' This may mean, either 'you will spend next winter in town' ('which' being coördinating), or 'the next of the winters when you are to live in town,' let that come when it may. In the former case, 'which' is the proper relative; in the latter case, the meaning is restrictive or defining, and would be best brought out by 'that': 'the next winter *that* you will spend in town.'

"A further consideration in favor of employing 'that' for explicative clauses is the unpleasant effect arising from the *too frequent repetition of 'who' and 'which.'* Grammarians often recommend 'that' as a means of varying the style; but this end ought to be sought in subservience to the still greater end of perspicuity.

"The following examples will serve further to illustrate the distinction between *that*, on the one hand, and *who* and *which*, on the other:

" ' In general, Mr. Burchell was fondest of the company of children, *whom* he used to call harmless little men.' ' Whom ' is here idiomatically used, being the equivalent of ' *and them* he used to call,' etc.

" ' Bacon at last, a mighty man, arose,
*Whom* a wise king and nation chose
Lord Chancellor of both their laws.'

Here, also, ' whom ' is equal to ' and him.'

" In the following instance the relative is restrictive or defining, and ' that ' would be preferable : ' the conclusion of the " Iliad " is like the exit of a great man out of company *whom* he has entertained magnificently.' Compare another of Addison's sentences : ' a man of polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures *that* the vulgar are not capable of receiving.'

" Both relatives are introduced discriminatingly in this passage :—' She had learned that from Mrs. Wood, *who* had heard it from her husband, *who* had heard it at the public-house from the landlord, *who* had been let into the secret by the boy *that* carried the beer to some of the prisoners.'

" The following sentences are ambiguous under the modern system of using ' who ' for both purposes :—' I met the boatman *who* took me across the ferry.' If ' who ' is the proper relative here, the meaning is, ' I met the boatman, *and he* took me across,' it being supposed that the boatman is known and definite. But if there be several boatmen, and I wish to indicate one in particular by the circumstance that he had taken me across the ferry, I should use ' that.' ' The youngest boy *who* has learned to dance is James.' This means either ' the youngest boy is James, *and he* has learned to dance,' or, ' of the boys, the youngest that has learned to dance is James.' This last sense is restrictive, and ' that ' should be used.

"'Turning now to 'which,' we may have a series of parallel examples. 'The court, *which* gives currency to manners, should be exemplary': here the meaning is 'the court should be exemplary, *for the court* gives currency to manners.' 'Which' is the idiomatic relative in this case. 'The cat, *which* you despise so much, is a very useful animal.' The relative here also is coördinating, and not restrictive. If it were intended to point out one individual cat specially despised by the person addressed, 'that' would convey the sense. 'A theory *which* does not tend to the improvement of practice is utterly unworthy of regard.' The meaning is restrictive; 'a theory *that* does not tend.' The following sentence is one of many from Goldsmith that give 'that' instead of 'which':—'Age, *that* lessens the enjoyment of life, increases our desire of living.' Thackeray also was fond of this usage. But it is not very common.

"'Their faith tended to make them improvident; but a wise instinct taught them that if there was one thing *which* ought not to be left to fate, or to the precepts of a deceased prophet, it was the artillery'; a case where 'that' is the proper relative.

"'All words, *which* are signs of complex ideas, furnish matter of mistake.' This gives an erroneous impression, and should be 'all words *that* are signs of complex ideas.'

"'In all cases of prescription, the universal practice of judges is to direct juries by analogy to the Statute of Limitations, to decide against incorporeal rights *which* have for many years been relinquished': say instead, 'incorporeal rights *that* have for many years,' and the sense is clear.

"It is necessary for the proper understanding of 'which' to advert to its peculiar function of referring to a whole clause as the antecedent: 'William ran along the top of the wall, *which* alarmed his mother very much.' The antece-

dent is obviously not the noun 'wall,' but the fact expressed by the entire clause—'William ran,' etc. 'He by no means wants sense, *which* only serves to aggravate his former folly'; namely, (not 'sense,' but) the circumstance 'that he does not want sense.' 'He is neither over-exalted by prosperity, nor too much depressed by misfortune; *which* you must allow marks a great mind.' 'We have done many things *which* we ought not to have done,' might mean 'we ought not *to have done many things*'; that is, 'we ought to have done few things.' 'That' would give the exact sense intended: 'we have done many things *that* we ought not to have done.' 'He began to look after his affairs himself, *which* was the way to make them prosper.'

"We must next allude to the cases where the relative is governed by a preposition. We can use a preposition before 'who' and 'which,' but when the relative is 'that,' the preposition must be thrown to the end of the clause. Owing to an imperfect appreciation of the genius of our language, offense was taken at this usage by some of our leading writers at the beginning of last century, and to this circumstance we must refer the disuse of 'that' as the relative of restriction.*

* "Speaking of Dryden, Hallam says, 'His "Essay on Dramatic Poesy," published in 1668, was reprinted sixteen years afterward, and it is curious to observe the changes which Dryden made in the expression. Malone has carefully noted all these; they show both the care the author took with his own style, and the change which was gradually working in the English language. The Anglicism of terminating the sentence with a preposition is rejected. Thus, "I can not think so contemptibly of the age I live in," is exchanged for "the age in which I live." "A deeper expression of belief than all the actor can persuade us to," is altered, "can insinuate into us." And, though the old form continued in use long after the time of Dryden, it has of late years been reckoned inelegant, and proscribed in all cases, perhaps with an unnecessary fastidiousness, to which I have not uniformly deferred, since

"'It is curious that the only circumstance connected with Scott, and related by Lockhart, *of which* I was a witness, is incorrectly stated in the "Life of Sir Walter."' —Leslie's 'Memoirs.' The relative should be restrictive: '*that* I was a witness *of*.'

"'There are many words *which* are adjectives *which* have nothing to do with the qualities of the nouns *to which* they are put.'—Cobbett. Better: 'there are many words *that* are adjectives *that* have nothing to do with the qualities of the nouns (*that*) they are put *to*.'

"'Other objects, *of which* we have not occasion to speak so frequently, we do not designate by a name of their own.' This, if amended, would be: 'other objects *that* we have not occasion to speak *of* so frequently, we do not,' etc.

"'Sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow *from which* we refuse to be divorced': 'the only sorrow (*that*) we refuse to be divorced *from*.'

"'Why, there is not a single sentence in this play *that* I do not know the meaning *of*.'—Addison.

our language is of Teutonic structure, and the rules of Latin and French grammar are not always to bind us.'

"The following examples, taken from Massinger's 'Grand Duke of Florence,' will show what was the usage of the Elizabethan writers:—

"'For I must use the freedom *I was born with*.'

"'In that dumb rhetoric *which* you *make use of*.'

"'—— if I had been heir
Of all the globes and sceptres mankind *bows to*.'

"'—— the name of friend
*Which* you are pleased to *grace me with*.'

"'—— wilfully ignorant in my opinion
Of what it did *invite him to*.'

"'I look to her as on a princess
*I dare not be ambitious of*.'

"'—— a duty
*That I was born with*.'

"'Originality is a thing we constantly clamor *for*, and constantly quarrel *with*.'—Carlyle.

"'A spirit more amiable, but less vigorous, than Luther's would have shrunk back from the dangers *which* he braved and surmounted': '*that* he braved'; 'the dangers *braved* and *surmounted* by him.'

"'Nor is it at all improbable that the emigrants had been guilty of those faults *from which* civilized men *who* settle among an uncivilized people are rarely free.'—Macaulay. 'Nor is it at all improbable that the emigrants had been guilty of *the* faults *that* (*such* faults *as*) civilized men *that settle* (*settling*, or *settled*) among an uncivilized people are rarely free *from*.'

"'Prejudices are notions or opinions *which* the mind entertains without knowing the grounds and reasons of them, and *which* are assented to without examination.'—Berkeley. The 'which' in both cases should be 'that,' but the relative may be entirely dispensed with by participial conversion: 'prejudices are notions or opinions *entertained* by the mind without knowing the grounds and reasons of them, and *assented* to without examination.'

"The too frequent repetition of 'who' and 'which' may be avoided by resolving them into the conjunction and personal or other pronoun: 'In such circumstances, the utmost that Bosquet could be expected to do was to hold his ground, (*which*) *and this* he did.'"—Bain's "Higher English Grammar."

This word is sometimes vulgarly used for *so*; thus, "I was *that* nervous I forgot everything"; "I was *that* frightened I could hardly stand."

**The.** Bungling writers sometimes write sheer nonsense, or say something very different from what they have in their minds, by the simple omission of the definite arti-

**cle** ; thus, "The indebtedness of the English tongue to the French, Latin and Greek is disclosed in almost every sentence framed." According to this, there is such a thing as a French, Latin and Greek tongue. Professor Townsend meant to say : "The indebtedness of the English tongue to the French, *the* Latin, and *the* Greek," etc.

**Then.** The use of this word as an adjective is condemned in very emphatic terms by some of our grammarians, and yet this use of it has the sanction of such eminent writers as Addison, Johnson, Whately, and Sir J. Hawkins. Johnson says, "In his *then* situation," which, if brevity be really the soul of wit, certainly has much more soul in it than "In the situation he then occupied." However, it is doubtful whether *then*, as an adjective, will ever again find favor with careful writers.

**Thence.** See WHENCE.

**Think for.** We not unfrequently hear a superfluous *for* tacked to a sentence ; thus, "You will find that he knows more about the affair than you think *for*."

**Those kind.** "*Those* kind of apples *are* best" : read, "*That* kind of apples *is* best." It is truly remarkable that many persons who can justly lay claim to the possession of considerable culture use this barbarous combination. It would be just as correct to say, "Those flock of geese," or "Those drove of cattle," as to say, "Those *sort* or *kind* of people."

**Those who.** This phrase, applied in a restrictive sense, is the modern substitute for the ancient idiom *they that*, an idiom in accordance with the true meaning of *that*.

"'*They that* told me the story said'; 'Blessed are *they that* mourn'; 'and Simon and *they that* were with him'; 'I love *them that* love me, and *they that* seek me early shall find me'; '*they that* are whole have no need of

a physician'; 'how sweet is the rest of *them that* labor!' 'I can not tell who to compare them to so fitly as to *them that* pick pockets in the presence of the judge'; '*they that* enter into the state of marriage cast a die of the greatest contingency' (J. Taylor).

"'*That* man hath perfect blessedness
*Who* walketh not astray,'

if expressed according to the old idiom would be, '*the* man hath—*that* walketh.'

"'That' and 'those,' as demonstrative adjectives, refer backward, and are not therefore well suited for the forward reference implied in making use of 'that which' and 'those who' as restrictive relatives. It is also very cumbrous to say '*that* case *to which* you allude' for 'the case (*that*) you allude *to*.'

"Take now the following: 'The Duke of Wellington is not one of *those who* interfere with matters *over which* he has no control': 'the Duke is not one of *them that* interfere in matters *that* they have no control *over* (matters *that* they can not control, *beyond their control, out of their province*).' If 'them that' sounds too antiquated, we may adopt as a convenient compromise, 'the Duke is not one of *those that*'; or, 'the Duke is not one to *interfere* in matters out of his province'; 'the duke is not one *that interferes* with *what* he has no control *over*.'"—Bain.

**Threadbare Quotations.** Among the things that are in bad taste in speaking and writing, the use of threadbare quotations and expressions is in the front rank. Some of these *usés et cassés* old-timers are the following: "Their name is legion"; "hosts of friends"; "the upper ten"; "Variety is the spice of life"; "Distance lends enchantment to the view"; "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever"; "the light fantastic toe"; "own the soft impeachment";

"fair women and brave men"; "revelry by night"; "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

**To.** It is a well-established rule of grammar that *to*, the sign of the infinitive mood, should not be used for the infinitive itself; thus, "He has not done it, nor is he likely *to*." It should be, "nor is he likely *to do it*."

We often find *to*, when the sign of the infinitive, separated by an adverb from the verb to which it belongs. Professor A. P. Peabody says that no standard English writer makes this mistake, and that, so far as he knows, it occurs frequently with but one respectable American writer.

Very often *to* is used instead of *at*; thus, "I have been *to* the theatre, *to* church, *to* my uncle's, *to* a concert," and so on. In all these cases, the preposition to use is clearly *at*, and not *to*. See, also, AND.

**To the Fore.** An old idiomatic phrase, now freely used again.

**Tongue.** "Much *tongue* and much judgment seldom go together."—L'Estrange. See LANGUAGE.

**Toward.** Those who profess to know about such things say that etymology furnishes no pretext for the adding of *s* to *ward* in such words as *backward*, *forward*, *toward*, *upward*, *onward*, *downward*, *afterward*, *heavenward*, *earthward*, and the like.

**Transferred Epithet.** This is the shifting of a qualifying word from its proper subject to some allied subject. Examples:

"The little fields made green
By husbandry of many *thrifty years*."

"He plods his *weary way*." "Hence to your *idle bed!*" By this figure the diction is rendered more terse and vigorous; it is much used in verse. For the sake of conciseness, it is used in prose in such phrases as the *lunatic asylum*,

the *criminal court*, the *condemned cell*, the *blind asylum*, the *cholera hospital*, the *foundling asylum*, and the like.

"Still in harmonious intercourse they lived
The rural day, and talked the flowing heart."

"There be some who, with everything to make them happy, plod their discontented and melancholy way through life, less grateful than the dog that licks the hand that feeds it."

**Transpire.** This is one of the most frequently misused words in the language. Its primary meaning is to evaporate insensibly through the pores, but in this sense it is not used; in this sense we use its twin sister *per*spire. *Transpire* is now properly used in the sense of to escape from secrecy, to become known, to leak out; and improperly used in the sense of to occur, to happen, to come to pass, and to elapse. The word is correctly used thus: "You will not let a word concerning the matter *transpire*"; "It *transpires* [leaks out] that S. & B. control the enterprise"; "Soon after the funeral it *transpired* [became known] that the dead woman was alive"; "It has *transpired* [leaked out] that the movement originated with John Blank"; "No report of the proceedings was allowed to *transpire*"; "It has not yet *transpired* who the candidate is to be." The word is incorrectly used thus: "The Mexican war *transpired* in 1847"; "The drill will *transpire* under shelter"; "The accident *transpired* one day last week"; "Years will *transpire* before it will be finished"; "More than a century *transpired* before it was revisited by civilized man."

**Trifling Minutiæ.** The meaning of *trifles* and of *minutiæ* is so nearly the same that no one probably ever uses the phrase *trifling minutiæ* except from thoughtlessness.

**Trustworthy.** See RELIABLE.

**Try.** This word is often improperly used for *make*. We *make* experiments, not *try* them, which is as incorrect as it would be to say, *try* the *attempt*, or the *trial*.

**Ugly.** In England, this word is restricted to meaning ill-favored; with us it is often used—and not without authority—in the sense of ill-tempered, vicious, unmanageable.

**Unbeknown.** This word is no longer used except by the unschooled.

**Underhanded.** This word, though found in the dictionaries, is a vulgarism, and as such is to be avoided. The proper word is *underhand*. An *underhand*, not an *underhanded*, proceeding.

**Universal—All.** "He is *universally* esteemed by *all* who know him." If he is *universally* esteemed, he must be esteemed by *all* who know him; and, if he is esteemed by *all* who know him, he must be *universally* esteemed.

**Upward of.** This phrase is often used, if not improperly, at least inelegantly, for *more than*; thus, "I have been here for *upward of* a year"; "For *upward of* three quarters of a century she has," etc., meaning, for *more than* three quarters of a century.

**Utter.** This verb is often misused for *say*, *express*. To *utter* means to *speak*, to *pronounce*; and its derivative *utterance* means the act, manner, or power of uttering, vocal expression; as, "the utterance of articulate sounds." We *utter* a cry; *express* a thought or sentiment; *speak* our mind; and, though prayers are *said*, they may be *uttered* in a certain tone or manner. "Mr. Blank is right in all he *utters*": read, *says*. "The court *uttered* a sentiment that all will applaud": read, *expressed* a sentiment.

The primary meaning of the adjective *utter* is outer, on the outside; but it is no longer used in this sense. It is now used in the sense of complete, total, perfect, mere,

entire; but he who uses it indiscriminately as a synonym of these words will frequently utter *utter* nonsense—i. e., he will utter that which is without the pale of sense. For example, we can not say *utter* concord, but we can say *utter* discord—i. e., without the pale of concord.

**Valuable.** The following sentence, which recently appeared in one of the more fastidious of our morning papers, is offered as an example of extreme slipshodness in the use of language: "Sea captains are among the most *valualle* contributors to the Park aviary." What the writer probably meant to say is, "Sea captains are among those whose contributions to the Park aviary are the most valuable."

**Vast.** This word is often met with in forcible-feeble diction, where it is used instead of *great* or *large* to qualify such words as number, majority, multitude, and the like. Big words and expletives should be used only where they are really needed; where they are not really needed, they go wide of the object aimed at. The sportsman that hunts small game with buck-shot comes home empty-handed.

**Veracity.** The loss would be a small one if we were to lose this word and its derivatives. Truth and its derivatives would supply all our needs. In the phrase so often heard, "A man of truth and veracity," *veracity* is entirely superfluous, it having precisely the same meaning as truth. The phrase, "A big, large man," is equally good diction.

**Verbiage.** An unnecessary profusion of words is called *verbiage:* verbosity, wordiness.

"I thought what I read of it *verbiage*."—Johnson.

Sometimes a better name than verbiage for wordiness would be *emptiness*. Witness: "Clearness may be developed and cultivated in three ways. (*a*) By constantly practicing in heart and life the thoughts and ways of honesty and frankness." The first sentence evidently means, "Clear-

ness may be *attained* in three ways"; but what the second sentence means—if it means anything—is more than I can tell. Professor L. T. Townsend, "Art of Speech," vol. i, p. 130, adds: "This may be regarded as the surest path to greater transparency of style." The transparency of Dr. Townsend's style is peculiar. Also, p. 144, we find: "The laws and rules[1] thus far laid down[2] furnish ample foundation for[3] the general statement that an easy and natural[4] expression, an exact verbal incarnation of one's thinking,[5] together with the power of using appropriate figures, and of making nice discriminations between approximate synonyms,[6] each being an important factor in correct style, are attained in two ways.[7] (1) Through moral[8] and mental discipline. (2) Through continuous and intimate[9] acquaintance with such authors as best exemplify those attainments."[10]

1. Would not *laws* cover the whole ground? 2. *En passant* I would remark that Dr. Townsend did not make these laws, though he so intimates. 3. I suggest the word *justify* in place of these four. 4. What is natural is easy; *easy*, therefore, is superfluous. 5. If this means anything, it does not mean more than the adjective *clear* would express, if properly used in the sentence. 6. *Approximate* synonyms!! Who ever heard of any antagonistic or even of dissimilar synonyms? 7. The transparency of this sentence is not unlike the transparency of corrugated glass. 8. What has morality to do with correctness? 9. An intimate acquaintance would suffice for most people. 10. Those attainments! What are they? Dr. Townsend's corrugated style makes it hard to tell.

This paragraph is so badly conceived throughout that it is well-nigh impossible to make head, middle, or tail of it; still, if I am at all successful in guessing what Professor

Townsend wanted to say in it, then—when shorn of its redundancy and high-flown emptiness—it will read somewhat like this: "The laws thus far presented justify the general statement that a clear and natural mode of expression—together with that art of using appropriate figures and that ability properly to discriminate between synonyms which are necessary to correctness—is attained in two ways. (1) By mental discipline. (2) By the study of our best authors."

The following sentence is from a leading magazine: "If we begin a system of interference, *regulating men's gains*, bolstering here, *in order to strengthen this interest*, [and] repressing *elsewhere* [there], in order to equalize wealth, we shall do *an* [a] *immense* deal of mischief, and without bringing about a more agreeable condition of things *than now* [we] shall *simply* discourage enterprise, repress industry, and check material growth *in all directions*." Read without the eighteen words in italics and with the four inclosed.

"Nothing disgusts sooner than the empty pomp of language."

**Vice.** See CRIME.

**Vicinity.** This word is sometimes incorrectly used without the possessive pronoun; thus, "Washington and vicinity," instead of "Washington and *its* vicinity." The primary meaning of *vicinity* is nearness, proximity. In many of the cases in which vicinity is used, *neighborhood* would be the better word, though *vicinity* is perhaps preferable where it is a question of mere locality.

**Vocation—Avocation.** These words are frequently confounded. A man's *vocation* is his profession, his calling, his business; and his *avocations* are the things that occupy him incidentally. Mademoiselle Bernhardt's *vocation* is acting; her *avocations* are painting and sculpture.

"The tracing of resemblances among the objects and events of the world is a constant *avocation* of the human mind."

**Vulgar.** By the many, this word is probably more frequently used improperly than properly. As a noun, it means the common people, the lower orders, the multitude, the many; as an adjective, it means coarse, low, unrefined, as "the *vulgar* people." The sense in which it is misused is that of immodest, indecent. The wearing, for example, of a gown too short at the top may be *indecent*, but is not *vulgar*.

**Was.** "He said he had come to the conclusion that there *was* no God." "The greatest of Byron's works *was* his whole work taken together."—Matthew Arnold. What is true at all times should be expressed by using the verb in the present tense. The sentences above should read *is*, not *was*.

**Wharf.** See DOCK.

**What.** "He would not believe but *what* I did it": read, but *that*. "I do not doubt *but what* I shall go to Boston to-morrow": read, doubt *that*. We say properly, "I have nothing *but what* you see"; "You have brought everything *but what* I wanted."

**Whence.** As this adverb means—unaided—*from* what place, source, or cause, it is, as Dr. Johnson styled it, "a vicious mode of speech" to say *from whence*, Milton to the contrary notwithstanding. Nor is there any more propriety in the phrase *from thence*, as *thence* means—unaided—from that place. "*Whence* do you come?" not "*From whence* do you come?" Likewise, "He went *hence*," not "*from hence*."

**Whether.** This conjunction is often improperly repeated in a sentence; thus, "I have not decided whether I shall go to Boston or *whether I shall go* to Philadelphia."

**Which.** This pronoun as an *interrogative* applies to *persons* as well as to *things;* as a *relative*, it is now made to refer to *things only*.

"*Which* is employed in coördinate sentences, where *it*, or *they*, and a conjunction might answer the purpose; thus, 'At school I studied geometry, *which* (and it) I found useful afterward.' Here the new clause is something independent added to the previous clause, and not limiting that clause in any way. So in the adjectival clause; as, 'He struck the poor dog, *which* (and it, or although it) had never done him harm.' Such instances represent the most accurate meaning of *which*. *Who* and *which* might be termed the COÖRDINATING RELATIVES.

"*Which* is likewise used in *restrictive* clauses that limit or explain the antecedent; as, 'The house *which* he built still remains.' Here the clause introduced by *which* specifies, or points out, the house that is the subject of the statement, namely, by the circumstance that a certain person built it. As remarked with regard to *who*, our most idiomatic writers prefer *that* in this particular application, and would say, 'The house *that* he built still remains.'"

"*Which* sometimes has a special reference attaching to it, as the neuter relative: 'Cæsar crossed the Rubicon, *which* was in effect a declaration of war.' The antecedent in this instance is not *Rubicon*, but the entire clause.

"There is a peculiar usage where *which* may *seem* to be still regularly used in reference to persons, as in 'John is a soldier, *which* I should like to be,' that is, 'And I should like *to be a soldier*.'" See THAT.

**Who.** There are few persons, even among the most cultivated, who do not make frequent mistakes in the use of this pronoun. They say, "*Who* did you see?" "*Who* did you meet?" "*Who* did he marry?" "*Who* did you

hear?" "*Who* did he know?" "*Who* are you writing to?" "*Who* are you looking at?" In all these sentences the interrogative pronoun is in the objective case, and should be used in the objective form, which is *whom*, and not *who*. To show that these sentences are not correct, and are not defensible by supposing any ellipsis whatsoever, we have only to put the questions in another form. Take the first one, and, instead of "Who did you see?" say, "Who saw you?" which, if correct, justifies us in saying, "Who knew he," which is the equivalent of "Who did he know?" But "Who saw you?" in this instance, is clearly not correct, since it says directly the opposite of what is intended.

*Who* was little used as a relative till about the sixteenth century. Bain says: "In modern use, more especially in books, *who* is frequently employed to introduce a clause intended to restrict, define, limit, or explain a noun (or its equivalent); as, 'That is the man *who* spoke to us yesterday.'"

"Here the clause introduced by *who* is necessary to define or explain the antecedent *the man;* without it, we do not know who *the man* is. Such relative clauses are typical *adjective* clauses—i. e., they have the same effect as adjectives in limiting nouns. This may be called the RESTRICTIVE use of the relative.

"Now it will be found that the practice of our most idiomatic writers and speakers is to prefer *that* to *who* in this application.

"*Who* is properly used in such coördinate sentences as, 'I met the watchman, *who* told me there had been a fire.' Here the two clauses are distinct and independent; in such a case, *and he* might be substituted for *who*.

"Another form of the same use is when the second

clause is of the kind termed adverbial, where we may resolve *who* into a personal or demonstrative pronoun and conjunction. 'Why should we consult Charles, *who* (*for he, seeing that he*) knows nothing of the matter?'

"*Who* may be regarded as a modern objective form, side by side with *whom*. For many good writers and speakers say '*who* are you talking of?' '*who* does the garden belong to?' '*who* is this for?' '*who* from?'" etc.

If this be true—if *who may* be regarded as a modern objective form, side by side with *whom*—then, of course, such expressions as "*Who* did you see?" "*Who* did you meet?" "*Who* did he marry?" "*Who* were you with?" "*Who* will you give it to?" and the like, are correct. That they are used colloquially by well-nigh everybody, no one will dispute; but that they are *correct*, few grammarians will concede. See THAT.

**Whole.** This word is sometimes most improperly used for *all*; thus, "The *whole* Germans seem to be saturated with the belief that they are really the greatest people on earth, and that they would be universally recognized as being the greatest, if they were not so exceeding modest." "The whole Russians are inspired with the belief that their mission is to conquer the world."—Alison.

**Wholesome.** See HEALTHY.

**Whose.** Mr. George Washington Moon discountenances the use of *whose* as the possessive of *which*. He says, "The best writers, when speaking of inanimate objects, use *of which* instead of *whose*." The correctness of this statement is doubtful. The truth is, I think, that good writers use that form for the possessive case of *which* that in their judgment is, in each particular case, the more euphonious, giving the preference, perhaps, to *of which*. On this subject Dr. Campbell says: "The possessive of

*who* is properly *whose*. The pronoun *which*, originally indeclinable, had no possessive. This was supplied, in the common periphrastic manner, by the help of the preposition and the article. But, as this could not fail to enfeeble the expression, when so much time was given to mere conjunctives, all our best authors, both in prose and verse, have now come regularly to adopt, in such cases, the possessive of *who*, and thus have substituted one syllable in the room of three, as in the example following: 'Philosophy, *whose* end is to instruct us in the knowledge of nature,' for 'Philosophy, *the* end *of which* is to instruct us.' Some grammarians remonstrate; but it ought to be remembered that use, well established, must give law to grammar, and not grammar to use."

Professor Bain says: "*Whose*, although the possessive of *who*, and practically of *which*, is yet frequently employed for the purpose of restriction: 'We are the more likely to guard watchfully against those faults *whose* deformity we have seen fully displayed in others.' This is better than 'the deformity *of which* we have seen.' 'Propositions of *whose* truth we have no certain knowledge.'—Locke." Dr. Fitzedward Hall says that the use of *whose* for *of which*, where the antecedent is not only irrational but inanimate, has had the support of high authority for several hundred years.

**Widow Woman.** Since widows are always women, why say a widow *woman?* It would be perfectly correct to say a *widowed* woman.

**Widowhood.** There is good authority for using this word in speaking of men as well as of women.

**Without.** This word is often improperly used instead of *unless;* as, "You will never live to my age *without* you keep yourself in breath and exercise"; "I shall not go

*without* my father consents": properly, *unless* my father consents, or, *without* my father's consent.

**Worst.** We should say *at the worst*, not *at worst.*

**Wove.** The past participle of the verb *to weave* is *woven.* "Where was this cloth *woven?*" not *wove.*

**You are mistaken.** See MISTAKEN.

**You was.** Good usage does, and it is to be hoped always will, consider *you was* a gross vulgarism, certain grammarians to the contrary notwithstanding. *You* is the form of the pronoun in the second person plural, and must, if we would speak correctly, be used with the corresponding form of the verb. The argument that we use *you* in the singular number is so nonsensical that it does not merit a moment's consideration. It is a custom we have—and have in common with other peoples—to speak to one another in the second person plural, and that is all there is of it. The Germans speak to one another in the *third* person plural. The exact equivalent in German of our *How are you?* is, *How are they?* Those who would say *you was* should be consistent, and in like manner say *you has* and *you does.*

**Yours, &c.** The ignorant and obtuse not unfrequently profess themselves at the bottom of their letters "Yours, &c." And so forth! forth what? Few vulgarisms are equally offensive, and none could be more so. In printing correspondence, the newspapers often content themselves with this short-hand way of intimating that the writer's name was preceded by some one of the familiar forms of ending letters; this an occasional dunderhead seems to think is sufficient authority for writing himself, *Yours, &c.*

THE END.

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